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ABSTRACT

Project ARETE and the English Festival, two programs sponsored by the English Department of Youngstown State University, are described in this report. The programs bring together university and public school teachers of all grade levels to reward students for reading and writing outside the classroom, assess student writing, renew classroom teaching, and expand professional participation. Included in this report are: (1) an essay, "Youngstown State University: The English Festival and Project ARETE," by Barbara Brothers et al.; and (2) the "Teacher to Teacher" manual for composition instruction in the Youngstown and Mahoning County schools by Gratia Murphy and Gary Salvner. Chapters of the manual deal with the following topics: assumptions about teaching writing; assessment: purposes and practices; the trait of purpose; the trait of direction; the trait of ideas; the trait of style; and the trait of presentation. An assessment primer for teachers is appended along with newsletters describing the project. These programs earned an honorable mention in the G. Theodore Mitau Award for Innovation and Change in Higher Education. They also earned a bronze medal in 1985 from the Council for Advancement and Support of Education for High School/College Partnerships. (SM)

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ARETE: Ohio Board of Regents, Early English Assessment Grant
(funded from Ohio Board of Regents)

Youngstown State University, Department of English
Project Director (Contact) Dr. Barbara Brothers,
Chairperson, Department of
English, Youngstown OH 44555-0001
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AASCU/ERIC Model Programs Inventory Project

The AASCU/ERIC Model Programs Inventory is a two-year project seeking to establish and test a model system for collecting and disseminating information on model programs at AASCU-member institutions--375 of the public four-year colleges and universities in the United States.

The four objectives of the project are:

- o To increase the information on model programs available to all institutions through the ERIC system
- o To encourage the use of the ERIC system by AASCU institutions
- o To improve AASCU's ability to know about, and share information on, activities at member institutions, and
- o To test a model for collaboration with ERIC that other national organizations might adopt.

The AASCU/ERIC Model Programs Inventory Project is funded with a grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education to the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, in collaboration with the ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education at The George Washington University.

ABSTRACT

COLLABORATIVE LEARNING; THE ENGLISH FESTIVAL AND PROJECT ARETE OF YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

Project ARETE and the English Festival, two programs sponsored by the English Department of Youngstown State University, bring together university and public school teachers of all grade levels to reward students for reading and writing outside the classroom, to assess student writing, to renew classroom teaching, and to expand professional participation. The model of collaborative learning that informs both projects has revitalized teaching at all levels of instruction; additionally, it has brought our institutions together in an atmosphere of mutual respect and support.

Youngstown State University Department of English

Introduction

We have supplied a xeroxed copy of an essay "Youngstown State University: The English Festival and Project ARETE"¹ that describes both **Project ARETE** and the English Festival. These are the programs we submitted under the title "Collaborative Learning" and for which we received an Honorable Mention, G. Theodore Mitau Award for Innovation and Change in Higher Education.

These programs also earned us a Bronze Medal in 1985 from the Council for Advancement and Support of Education for High School/College Partnerships.

¹Barbara Brothers, Carol Gay, Gratia Murphy and Gary Salvner for School-College Collaborative Programs in English, ed. Ron Fortune, New York: Modern Language Association, 1986: 52-60.

ARETE Appendices Supplied:

1. Teacher to Teacher manual
2. VHP Humanities newsletter (p. 3)
3. 2 of the 5 issues of Write Angles, a teacher newsletter produced under Project INTERACT, a replication of Project ARETE (see form B)

Youngstown State University: The English Festival and Project ARETE

Barbara Brothers, Carol Gay, Gratia Murphy, and Gary Salvner

Concerned about the reading and writing abilities of our students at Youngstown State University and their knowledge and appreciation of literature and literary history, the English department began in 1974 to work with area teachers, kindergarten through twelfth grade. Our objectives were (and continue to be) to emphasize the importance of literature and of reading and writing and to work toward ways in which instruction and the curriculum might produce more literate students than those who were entering the university. The programs we sponsored that focus on literature for area teachers have effected changes not only in their teaching and curriculum but in our own as well. On the other hand, efforts to improve our own composition program have developed into specific programs for area schools in the teaching and assessment of writing. The informal assessment that we made of our students in 1974 demonstrated to us the need to offer remedial instruction in writing and to develop a test that would identify the students requiring that instruction. Becoming knowledgeable about research in the teaching of writing and about methods of assessing the writing skills of students enabled us to develop a more effective writing curriculum at the university and to aid the schools in improving their curricula. In collaboration with the schools, for example, we have undertaken "assessment and revitalization efforts for the teaching of English"—Project ARETE, described later in this report. Though cultivating collegiality between secondary and postsecondary teachers was not an initial objective, the spirit of mutual support, cooperation, and humility (we did not have all the answers) with which we entered into our endeavors has made that collegiality an outcome and a key ingredient in what successes we have had. We are learning from each other. English education is a profession of which we are all a part.

Background

The development and growth of our cooperative programs with the schools have been shaped, of course, by the structure and nature of our institution and department. Youngstown State University is a commuter school, an urban university that draws nearly ninety percent of its undergraduates from a tricounty area. Since we offer both the master of arts degree in English and a master teacher degree in English, we serve the educational needs of teachers as well. Two English faculty members hold cross appointments in the School of Education, and the department not only advises and supervises undergraduate student teachers

but also offers courses in English education that are cross-listed as School of Education offerings.

Initially we chose to work with the schools by sponsoring in-service workshops for area teachers on the professional day sponsored each fall by the Northeastern Ohio Teachers Association (NEOTA). In 1974, we held a workshop on children's literature, organized by Carol Gay, an American literature specialist who taught children's literature; the sessions were led by university faculty members whose specializations ranged from Renaissance drama to the modern British novel. In 1975, we again sponsored a literature workshop, but through funds NEOTA had for the program, we secured as principal speaker Michael Slater, a Dickens scholar at Birkbeck College, University of London, and a Distinguished Visiting Professor at Ohio State University. Thus, besides having something of value to say to the grade school or high school teacher about our literary fields, this workshop enriched us and our teaching.

In addition, we involved some of the area teachers in planning and leading the workshops and discussion groups that were a part of that program. Our subsequent NEOTA programs, therefore, enabled school and university teachers not only to hear such scholars as Elisabeth McPherson, David Bleich, and Richard Beach and to consider what implications their ideas had for teaching writing and literature but also to get to know one another and to form professional ties. Our faculty became identified as an important resource, and various members were asked to conduct in-service workshops at the area schools, to serve on textbook selection and curriculum revision committees within the schools, and to speak to high school English classes about the literary works assigned in the course. Our NEOTA programs also gave us the model of cooperative planning and participation and of mutual learning that informs Project ARETE and the English Festival, also described below. And we invite the area teachers to university-funded presentations by scholars.

The NEOTA workshops also led to professional growth in our own classrooms. In our graduate classes we began to ask for papers with pedagogical as well as scholarly themes—a slide lecture on Yeats for high school students or a unit plan for teaching Chaucer or Shakespeare—and to give more and varied writing assignments for audiences other than scholars. We were asking ourselves what kinds of assignments would best contribute to the professional development of our students. We looked at our own curriculum to determine if it was meeting the needs of all our students: those who were practicing high school English teachers or who would become lower-division college instructors, those pursuing the MA as a foundation for even more advanced graduate work, those planning to use their acquired skills in other than academic occupations, and those seeking only personal enrichment. We revised the graduate curriculum to ensure that students would broaden as well as deepen their knowledge of literature, still the core of our program, and we expanded the course offerings in English education to include children's and adolescent literature and additional classes on the teaching of writing.

In 1976 we used our graduate class in the teaching of English to bring in selected schoolteachers of all grade levels for a summer workshop on the teaching of writing. The course was planned by H. Thomas McCracken, who regularly taught courses in English education, and Gratia Murphy, the director of composition, along with Barbara Brothers. We asked a number of other faculty

members to make presentations, but we stipulated that they had to participate in the workshop, since we were all learning from one another. The following summer, using the same format, we held an advanced workshop on evaluating writing. A bibliography of sources on teaching and evaluating writing was compiled for the teachers who took the course, and that bibliography became a resource for our own composition teachers. Having seen the value of coming together to consider research, problems, and strategies related to teaching writing, we also initiated a fall workshop for our own teachers, including limited-service and full-service faculty members and graduate assistants. In addition, we required our graduate assistants to take the teaching-of-writing course and to participate in a year-long noncredit practicum to prepare them for their initial teaching assignments. The introduction to composition and theory course and a seminar on problems and issues in teaching writing instruct teachers at all levels.

Since a large number of area high school students enroll at YSU, we made the students' English placement test results available to their high school counselors. In addition to the Nelson-Denny Reading Test, the English placement test consists of two writing tasks, a sentence-combining and editing exercise and a brief original composition on a focused topic. The schools thus became aware that we assessed the writing abilities of their college-bound students and that we based the assessment on the students' writing rather than on answers to multiple-choice questions. We had clearly signaled the need for better writing instruction and demonstrated the inadequacy of using grammar drills and tests to teach and evaluate writing.

The Writing Center, which we established to help meet the students' needs for remedial and supplemental instruction and for tutorial help in writing for their other courses, served as a model for area schools, some of which established their own writing centers and others of which called on us to identify resources useful for remedial instruction in writing.

To further our knowledge of the problems the English teachers in the schools were facing, the director of freshman composition spent her sabbatical teaching half days in each of the five city high schools. During the year she applied for a basic-skills grant from the Ohio Department of Education to fund presentations by university faculty members in a series of afternoon workshops for the Youngstown English teachers.

Other programs we directed that have been funded, at least in part, by grants from the Ohio State Department of Education include institutes for the Youngstown public and parochial school systems and a Trumbull County institute to prepare teachers to integrate the teaching of writing, reading, speaking, and listening into a new high school curriculum to replace the old elective mini-courses. Colleges and universities that wish to work with the schools should keep abreast of the grants available to the public schools and to departments or schools of education and should be aware that those grants change, often from year to year. They also should know about the funds within the local school districts for teacher development and should see that some of those funds go toward giving English teachers the time and help they need for curriculum and instruction development.

Institutions, like YSU, that attract students from a limited geographical area gain, of course, by having better prepared freshmen, freshmen who are more

likely to stay in school and to graduate. Our community (the schools, the university, and the public) has a heightened sense of the importance of writing and literature, and our cooperative efforts have improved our instruction and curriculum. By joining hands, not pointing fingers of blame, we are enhancing the literacy not only of the students who enter our university but also of those who leave it.

The Youngstown State University English Festival

The YSU English Festival was conceived in the fall of 1978 when two members of the English department decided to establish a memorial fund to reward students in junior and senior high schools for distinctive writing based on careful reading. The program that grew out of this initial desire was prompted by the department's long-standing interest in furthering fruitful communication between area schools and the university. The department endorsed the awards and appointed a committee of five faculty members to establish a format. Before long, an advisory board of area educators and community leaders had been set up to aid in planning and in defining objectives, and an entire program of reading and writing activities had been devised.

Since that first festival in the spring of 1979, the program has steadily grown from 550 students and teachers coming to the campus for a day's activities based on reading and writing to a three-day program drawing over 2,400 students and 400 teachers and parents from over ninety-nine schools in a five-county area. The advisory board has grown to twenty members, and this year over 150 area teachers actively participated in the festival, either as presenters or as judges. In addition, seven YSU faculty members served on the festival committee and another twenty-five took an active part in the program.

The English Festival is unique because its student participants—average students as well as honor students—must read the seven carefully chosen books on the annual festival booklist in order to be excused from their classes at school to spend a full day on the YSU campus engaging in various competitions and activities centering on the booklist. Students who begin attending the festival in the seventh grade and who attend each year thereafter will have read forty-two festival books by the time they graduate.

Each day the thousands of essays and other forms of writing done at the festival are evaluated by teachers trained in both holistic and primary-trait reading. At the daily awards ceremony, well over three hundred winners are given certificates and various prizes contributed by publishing houses and numerous area business firms and community groups.

Objectives

All teachers and students wishing to attend the English Festival receive a brochure stating the project's objectives: (1) to provide an exciting and stimulating setting for enjoyable and worthwhile reading and writing activities, (2) to support teachers who emphasize reading and writing in the classroom, (3) to offer models for effective classroom activities, (4) to involve the whole community in fostering good reading and writing skills, (5) to recognize and reward distinctive writ-

ing, and (6) to introduce students to a wide variety of superior books covering a broad range of interests.

Program Structure

The English Festival works in the following way. All students attend a talk by a nationally recognized author (e.g., Joan Blos, 1983; William Sleator, 1984; M. E. Kerr, 1985) and take a book quiz that helps determine whether or not they have read the seven books required for participation in the festival and tests their skill at remembering details. They can also take part in a variety of other activities: impromptu writing contests and writing games, which not only cultivate reading and writing skills but also encourage students to think creatively, follow directions, and draw effective generalizations; language games, which enable them to work with important principles of language in a game situation; prose, poetry, and journalism workshops; writing labs, which give them experience in group writing; and insight sessions, where they get a chance to discuss specific books with their peers as well as with a group leader, who can be a university faculty member, an area teacher with exceptional classroom skills, or a faculty member from another university. In addition, they can witness dramatic or media presentations. The day culminates with the awarding of prizes for achievements in the various competitions. The excitement of a festival awards ceremony rivals that of a basketball game, with schools cheering students who have demonstrated reading and writing skill rather than athletic ability—a pleasant change of focus.

Teachers can attend a discussion and question-and-answer session with the guest author; hear a specialist talk about a problem of interest to teachers, parents, and librarians (e.g., James Davis of Ohio University on the topic "Open Book: Open Mind"); participate in judging sessions in holistic and primary-trait scoring; learn new teaching strategies by attending any of the sessions scheduled for students; and hear the guest author address the students.

Teachers and students have responded to the festival with such eagerness that, though we bring 2,400 students to campus each year, we turn away more than we can accept. Because we have always approached area teachers as colleagues, cooperation with area schools has been extraordinarily positive. While teachers are sometimes hesitant to lead discussions, they welcome serving as writing-lab coleaders, along with university faculty members, and as judges, an experience they find valuable and enjoyable. Further, teachers and administrators are eager to serve on the advisory board, which takes an active part in determining policy and solving administrative problems.

Current Problems

The main problem the department has faced with the festival program is its overwhelming success. The large number of schools wanting to participate puts a great strain on the faculty and on university facilities. True, we have had help: grants from B. Dalton Bookseller, the Ohio Humanities Council, and Bank One of Ohio bring guest speakers and resource people from other universities, area businesses have generously donated prizes (over \$5,000 in 1984), and the university absorbs the printing and secretarial costs. Still, those who administer the

program or participate in it receive no released time. Since almost three-fourths of the English department's full-time staff take part in the activities and since seven members serve on the festival committee, working an average of three hours per week, the commitment of the department has reached its limits. Since our festival cannot grow bigger, the committee has prepared a slide show and information packets to encourage area schools to sponsor their own "minifestivals" and to demonstrate to other interested universities and high schools how to create and administer their own programs. Two colleges, Otterbein in Ohio and Delta in Michigan, have established festivals modeled after YSU's with much the same success and enthusiastic response.

Plans

As for the future, since the general outline of the program—both in its goals and in its organization—has been successful, we do not anticipate any great changes. We are moving toward greater parent participation by actively involving parents as well as students in group discussions of the books, inviting parents to serve as monitors and judges and encouraging them to get used to the idea of sharing literature with their children. We intend to bring in more resource people from other universities and high schools outside the area to provide classroom models of teaching activities and to keep area teachers abreast of current theory and practice in teaching reading and writing. Books of professional interest are awarded to the schools of the top essay winners. Finally, to recognize outstanding critical writing by teachers and to identify and reward the skills and knowledge that make for outstanding teaching in the secondary schools, the chairperson of the English department offers an annual prize, begun in 1985, for the best critical essay about a festival book written by a teacher from a participating school.

Our main concern for the future is maintaining the high level of success, the efficient organization, and the exciting sense of enthusiasm that the festival has achieved in the past.

Project ARETE

Our assessment and revitalization efforts for the teaching of English—Project ARETE—would never have been implemented, perhaps not even conceived, if the avenues of communication between the English department and the area secondary schools had not already been in place. In September 1983, the Ohio Board of Regents (OBOR) announced the availability of funds for the Early English Composition Assessment Program (EECAP) to help Ohio's public high schools and state-supported universities work together to reduce the need for remedial writing instruction at the university. In the academic year 1982-83, our department had already tested juniors in the five public and two parochial high schools for composition skills and helped the Youngstown school system develop a curriculum guide for English IV, a course designed for college-bound seniors who had scored badly in their junior year. Therefore, when OBOR offered up to \$30,000 a year for a two-year period, money to be matched by the school districts and the university, we agreed to work with the schools in Youngstown

again and to add the fourteen Mahoning County high schools. Project ARETE was funded, with Gratia Murphy and Gary Salvner as project directors the first year and Gratia Murphy and John Mason the second. The project involved thirty-six high school teachers, two curriculum specialists in the Youngstown and Mahoning school systems, five faculty consultants from the English department, and a consultant from the state department of education. The chairperson of the English department and the directors of instruction from Mahoning County and the Youngstown public schools participated in both planning and implementing the project.

Objectives

Project ARETE has two specific objectives: first, to help schools learn how to assess the writing of their students reliably and efficiently; and second, building on that assessment, to shape curricular changes and classroom methods to produce more effective composition instruction in the local secondary schools. The project seeks to cultivate collegiality and communication between university and high school instructors. For example, teachers were trained to administer a large-scale writing test in their schools and, after an intensive introduction to two techniques of assessment (holistic and trait) and some practice sessions, scored the 3,088 writing samples of the juniors in the nineteen high schools. The teachers worked with the project directors and the faculty consultants to develop and refine their own trait scoring guide, identifying and describing the five qualities of writing they deemed important (purpose, direction, ideas, style, and presentation) and the characteristics of high, middle, and low performances in each of these qualities. Both high school and university teachers have profited from this collegial discussion of writing. High school teachers welcomed the additional access to research and theory that university teachers have, and university faculty members became aware of some of the practical teaching-load, schedule, and curriculum problems that high school teachers face.

Structure and Procedures

The activities of Project ARETE are related to its two objectives of large-scale assessment of student writing and revitalized composition instruction in the secondary schools. To provide the sample for assessment, all juniors in the nineteen high schools wrote a two-part examination similar to our English placement test: a sentence-combining and editing task and an original essay. Teachers read all samples (coded by student and school numbers) holistically, rating them on a scale of 1 to 4. Results were returned to the schools, showing student performance in both parts of the test, so that guidance counselors could direct students into proper courses for their senior year, particularly those students who had indicated they were college-bound. Students also completed a six-question attitudinal survey on writing and reading. Following the holistic scoring, forty percent of the 3,088 original essays were assessed on the five qualities teachers had outlined. Fourteen schools chose to use random selection, while the five Youngstown schools asked to use their college-bound students as the sample for this second, analytic scoring. After workshops devoted to the writing of the scoring guide, the teachers read the essays, marking them on a continuum of 1 to

7 for each of the five qualities outlined, with 1-2 scores being "low," 3-5 "middle," and 6-7 "high." Each essay received two readings, and a third reading if the first scores differed by four or more points. Essays were collated with their scoring slips, scores were tabulated, and reports showing means and performances in each of the five qualities for both the school and the system were returned to the school administrators. During the second year of the project, juniors were again tested (being asked only to write an original essay), and all papers were evaluated according to the trait scoring guide.

To meet the second objective, improved instruction, twenty-five participants, five university faculty consultants, and the project directors convened in a forty-hour workshop in June 1984 to write a draft of a composition resource manual. This manual explains in detail the five qualities used in trait scoring, offers annotated papers that show varying degrees of competence with regard to those qualities, includes theoretical discussions and relevant research, and provides sample teaching strategies for each quality. The manual was revised, edited, and class-tested during 1984-85 and made available to all high school English teachers in the nineteen schools for use as a resource guide for teaching. Because teachers themselves developed this resource, titled *Teacher to Teacher*, it has been accepted enthusiastically.

Problems

At this point in Project ARETE, our offices show the enormous amount of paper storing, organizing, shuffling, and recording that a project of this size requires, and we have had to add clerical help (although little could be done about space). More substantially, we have discovered places where we can make our procedures more efficient and our scoring guide easier for teachers to use. A computer program now does the time-consuming collating of readers' scores and prepares individualized letters giving results to students and statistical reports for teachers, schools, and districts. The biggest problem—and one that even technology cannot solve—is that both university and high school teachers lack the time to do all we had hoped. Although each project director has a teaching-load reduction of four hours per quarter, teachers are not free to meet until after the school day, and because of their busy schedules of teaching and supervising extracurricular activities, the project has meant long hours for all participants.

Plans

Project ARETE's immediate future is fairly well set, since our second proposal outlined in detail activities through 1987, OBOR having offered an additional two years of funding for ARETE. In addition to assessing the writing of all juniors in Youngstown and Mahoning County schools, we are assessing some ninth-grade students' writing. Test administrators are being trained within the schools so that the schools themselves can continue assessment after Project ARETE ends in 1987.

The revitalization efforts of the project also continue. *Teacher to Teacher* will be expanded and revised once more during the last year of the project. Project directors and university consultants from the English department are working

with schools to revise courses of study and curricula in written composition. Model units, prepared by teams of high school teachers and a YSU faculty consultant, are being distributed to all secondary English teachers at in-service workshops, and at least one retreat is planned to coordinate assessment and teaching efforts. A regional convention on assessing and teaching writing is planned for the spring of 1987 as a culminating activity for Project ARETE. Presentations will be made by both area teachers and university faculty members.

The Ohio State Department of Education has mandated that by the fall of 1987 schools must have a system of assessing writing competence at least three times during a student's twelve years of instruction. Although Project ARETE was not designed to meet this obligation, the methods of assessment we have developed are usable and reliable, and numbers of teachers have been trained in them.

We have had some inquiries about expanding our base to include other area schools; although we have not yet made a decision, the geographical spread of teachers and schools makes group meetings and reading sessions inconvenient, if not impossible.

Recommendation

One of the most surprising outcomes of Project ARETE has been the evidence of the continuing need for clear communication between secondary schools and universities. No matter how many cooperative projects or activities are undertaken, the need to go on talking and working together remains strong. It is amazing how much misinformation about the university and its expectations and procedures is current. High school teachers "know" about college programs and practices through their returning students, who often present an inaccurate or incomplete portrayal. That teachers are working together, sharing information, and clarifying the competencies and the experience that universities expect from incoming students is the most positive outcome of Project ARETE. It is also a signal that avenues of communication must be kept open, even—or especially—when projects such as ours are over. The fostering of collegiality and cooperation is important enough to teachers and students alike to make it a university activity of highest priority.

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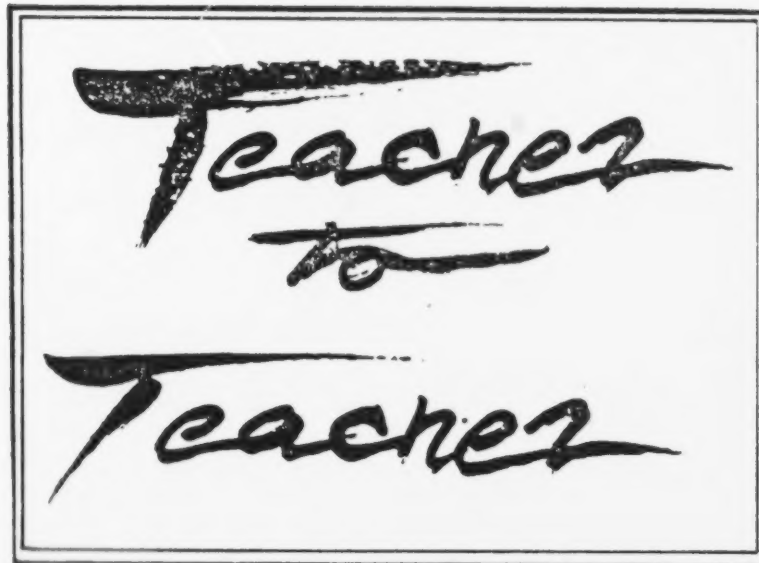
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**Composition Instruction
in the Youngstown and Mahoning County
Schools**

Second Edition, Revised and Expanded

**Gratia Murphy
Gary Salvner
Directors, Project ARETE**

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Department of English
Youngstown State University
Youngstown, Ohio 44555

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Department of English
Youngstown State University
Youngstown, Ohio 44555

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I don't see writing as a communication of something already discovered, as "truths" already known. Rather, I see writing as a job of experiment. It's like any discovery job; you don't know what's going to happen until you try it.

--William Stafford

Zcunds! I've never been so bethumped with words.

--William Shakespeare

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PREFACE

Teacher to Teacher was written by language arts and English teachers in Youngstown and Mahoning County as an aid to teachers of composition. Their aim in writing the manual, and ours in editing it, was to provide a usable resource for teachers which explains how assessment and instruction can work together in an effective K-12 writing program and to suggest possible strategies for instruction in composition at various grade levels. Because the authors of this manual believe that the teaching of composition must be informed by a knowledge of what writers do when they compose and by what research has told us about the development of writing ability, this manual contains some theoretical discussions of writing and writing pedagogy. The manual's design and emphasis, however, are decidedly practical. As its title suggests, Teacher to Teacher is a collection of suggestions from teachers to their colleagues for improving composition teaching in our schools.

In order to accomplish these purposes, this manual has been organized to be used in a variety of ways. Most teachers will want to read through the manual first to discern its assumptions and pattern, then use the text as a reference guide by re-examining portions as needed throughout the year. The organization of the manual is as follows: Chapter I, an introduction by the book's editors, contains a discussion of some of the assumptions and convictions which underlie this text. Building on the first chapter, Chapter II discusses more extensively our thinking about the proper relationship between instruction and assessment in a composition program. The chapter also provides a brief overview of the elements of an assessment program and describes the assessment system developed by the teachers who wrote the text. Chapters III-VII, the heart of the manual, discuss in turn five qualities or "traits" of good writing: a sense of purpose, organization or direction in writing, the ideas a writer uses, the style employed by the writer, and the presentation or editing skills demonstrated in the writing. Each chapter is arranged in the same way. First, there is a general introduction to the trait or quality under discussion, followed by a brief report of what research says about the value of that quality and how it is learned and taught. Next, the chapter discusses generally how competence in that particular trait develops through elementary, junior high, and senior high grades. Sample selections of student writing at various grade levels are included to map this development. Finally, each chapter concludes with a collection of strategies for teaching composition, focusing

particularly on the writing trait discussed in the chapter. Strategies are included which are appropriate for use in elementary, junior high, and high school classrooms. The final part of each chapter is an annotated bibliography of reading about the trait under discussion. Teacher to Teacher concludes with an appendix entitled "Assessment: A Primer for Teachers," which discusses briefly what teachers need to know about assessment procedures and makes suggestions for ways to involve teachers in the processes of assessment.

The production of this manual was part of the activities of Project ARETE, a joint program on teaching and assessing writing engaged in by the English Department at Youngstown State University and the public schools of Youngstown and Mahoning County during 1983-87. Funded jointly by the Ohio Board of Regents, Youngstown State University, and the public schools, the Project was part of a state-wide emphasis on stronger school-university articulation efforts in the area of composition teaching. ARETE, the Greek term for "excellence," stands also for Assessment and Revitalization Efforts for the Teaching of English.

A first edition of this manual, published in 1985, was completed through the efforts of 25 secondary school and university teachers. This revised and expanded edition includes material, not in the original, on elementary and junior high composition teaching and features a revised format which attempts to make clear how instruction and assessment must be made to work together in any effective writing program. This edition was made possible through the efforts of nearly 50 elementary and junior high teachers who met throughout the winter of 1987 to compile materials, and particularly through the efforts of 20 university and public school teachers who collaborated on the revisions of the five chapters which constitute the heart of Teacher to Teacher.

We wish to extend here our thanks to Dr. John B. Mason, who served as Project Director of ARETE 1984-85, when the first edition of this manual was published. Dr. Mason is now teaching at Western Washington University in Bellingham, Washington. Even with his heavy teaching schedule this year, Dr. Mason reviewed this new edition of Teacher to Teacher and offered us many fine suggestions. Dr. Bege Bowers of the English department at Youngstown State University gave us her careful expert editorial advice and help with chapter activities and the appendix on assessment. We thank them both for their help.

Aside from the contributors and authors of Teacher to Teacher, whose names appear at the end of this text, many

others contributed to the success of Project ARETE in general and this manual in particular. We thank the Ohio Board of Regents, Youngstown State University, and the Youngstown City and Mahoning County Schools for their commitment to and support of the Project. In particular, we thank Dr. Elaine Hairston and Ms. Marlene Rushay of the Ohio Board of Regents; Dr. Barbara Brothers, chair of the English Department of Youngstown State University; Dr. Richard Sheely and Ms. Suzanne Foster of the Youngstown City Schools; and Mr. Ron Kendall and Mr. Ron Infante of the Mahoning County Schools for their leadership and direction. Thanks go to the secretaries and student assistants in the English Department at Youngstown State University--and especially Betty Connors and Mary Louise Quisenberry--who prepared the manuscript and provided the expert clerical help that a project of this size and scope demanded. Our appreciation is also extended to Elayne M. S. Klovis, Laboratory Supervisor, English Department, whose creative energies and talents in graphic design are apparent in this edition of Teacher to Teacher, and to Barbara Murphy of the University's Computer Center for her help in word processing. Finally, we wish to thank the thousands of students who wrote for Project ARETE during the four years of its existence, and particularly the students whose writing appears in this manual. It was for the students that Project ARETE was created, and it is to them that this book is dedicated.

Gratia Murphy
Gary Salvner
Project Directors, ARETE

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*Some
Assumptions
about teaching
writing*

SOME ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT TEACHING WRITING

All teaching is shaped by our assumptions about subject matter, curriculum, and students. Because composition has long been taught according to assumptions which have been neither clearly set forth nor consistently applied, and because many of the old assumptions about writing pedagogy have been challenged in the last twenty years by extensive research and scholarship, we wish to begin this handbook by attempting to articulate what we feel are the fundamental assumptions in a good writing program. Of course, our own list of our assumptions may not be any more complete or correct than one compiled by our readers, since teaching, as an art, requires more of us in terms of convictions and motives than we ourselves can catalogue. Teaching, like breathing, would become impossible to accomplish if we became self-reflective about every stage of the process. Nevertheless, we are aware of six assumptions in particular which were discussed and applied consciously during the composing of this handbook. They are our beliefs that:

1. WRITING IS AN ACTIVITY WHICH CAN BE TAUGHT;
2. WRITING ABILITY DEVELOPS GRADUALLY, OVER TIME;
3. WRITING INSTRUCTION MUST BE A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY;
4. IF THEY ARE TO LEARN TO WRITE, STUDENTS MUST COME TO VALUE WRITING;
5. WRITING CAN BE RELIABLY EVALUATED;
6. A SHARED ASSESSMENT SYSTEM IS VITAL TO ANY INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM IN COMPOSITION.

Since all of these beliefs have important implications for teachers of composition at all grade levels, we reserve this first chapter for a discussion of them.

Our first assumption, that WRITING IS AN ACTIVITY WHICH CAN BE TAUGHT, seems obvious. It is not so obvious, however, in the context of the long-standing, widely-held conviction that only some students have "a talent for writing" which can be nurtured and developed. Writers are born, according to this belief, not made, and consequently some students bestowed with the wrong genes or wrong temperament will never become writers, no matter what is done for them. The extension of this belief is that writing per se cannot be

taught, that the most we teachers can do is to provide opportunity and encouragement for the talented while not unnecessarily aggravating those whose writing will not amount to much.

Project ARETE and this manual are based on precisely the opposite assumption. We hold that all students, notwithstanding their individual talents and differences, not only can, but must learn to write competently. Well-trained, knowledgeable teachers can provide meaningful instruction in writing and must be given the means to do so in order that all students have access to the power which writing brings.

This assumption about the "teachability" of writing has several implications for the classroom. First, while the fact that writing can (and must) be taught gives few clues as to how it should be taught, it does underscore the fact that active teaching is essential. Because writing occurs in a complex rhetorical context, and because it employs a challenging graphic system of language, almost no one learns to write without instruction.

While Teacher to Teacher does not propose a specific method of teaching writing, it assumes that writing teachers have to make lots of decisions and that they can make good ones when they know about the nature of writing and when they themselves are writers.

Writing, as writers know and testify to, is not an activity, but a series of activities, a recursive, non-linear process that involves such disparate activities as generation of ideas, incubation of thought, drafting, rethinking, rewriting, and editing. Writers know the inherent and real frustrations of the process--the false starts, the necessity for response from a reader at times during the process, the reshaping and rethinking of ideas, even the idiosyncracies that writers come to need in order to feel comfortable. Teachers who are writers understand the problem-solving nature of the writing process, are cognizant of the rhetorical decisions that writers must make to find purpose and audience and be able to create texts that fulfill their intentions. Teacher/writers know, and provide for, the individual needs and constraints that each writer has to understand to find a way through the maze that is the writing process. Above all, teachers who write themselves know where in the writing process help can be extended, when talking out problems provides clarification, when response to drafts provides pointers for revision, and when suggestions for editing and appropriateness of language are best made.

A second implication of the assumption that writing can be taught concerns the role of the teacher in the writing classroom. As James Moffett reminds us, practice and feedback are essential to writing improvement, and a classroom designed to facilitate practice and provide feedback will be set up as a workshop, in which students participate together on writing tasks, reinforce one another's progress through the stages of writing, and respond as readers to one another's drafts (193-194). In such a workshop atmosphere the teacher's role is not that of a law-giver, dispensing inflexible dicta about how student writers are to proceed or how finished pieces of writing are to be made to look, nor simply as judges of student writing (although they must do this also). Instead, the teacher in the writing class becomes a facilitator, providing help and encouragement as students work through the writing process and at the same time setting up opportunities for students to help one another.

It is not always easy for teachers to accept the changes in classroom environment and teaching strategies that their role as composition teachers demands. The traditional stance of the teacher who "fills up" empty heads with knowledge changes when teachers see themselves as co-participants with writers pursuing their craft. This is not to say, of course, that writing teachers lose control or direction over their classrooms. Behind the freedom that is characteristic of the writing classroom lie the careful planning, controlled structuring, and necessary evaluation that make for productive teaching.

A final implication of the assumption that writing can be taught is that there exists informed theory, research, and opinion about writing pedagogy which teachers will want to investigate. The writing teacher is a member of a profession that has proved itself to be productive in the investigation of its discipline; the effective writing teacher will seek ways to share in and derive knowledge from the richness.

This participation as a professional means not only that the teacher of writing knows what current research says it also suggests that writing teachers have the opportunity to become researchers themselves. Each class of students becomes a research opportunity for teachers, an opportunity which can enrich them intellectually and professionally. For too long teachers of writing have not seen themselves as partners in the search for knowledge through research. Now, to be "just composition teachers" becomes a chance to participate in what is an exciting, productive, and honored discipline.

A second assumption behind this manual concerns the development of writing ability in students. If writing is indeed an activity which can be taught, then teachers must be concerned not only with how that subject is addressed each day in the classroom (a matter of pedagogical method) but also with what sequence and pace might be followed in instruction (a matter of curricular scope and sequence). It is one thing, in other words, to agree that writing is "teachable" and thus deserving of our classroom time; it is quite another to agree on how that classroom time should be allocated.

An important assumption of this program which has implications for curricular scope and sequence is that WRITING ABILITY DEVELOPS GRADUALLY, OVER TIME. What we know about both language acquisition and cognitive development suggests that writing ability, encompassing as it does so many complex skills and purposes, accumulates slowly in much the same way that reading ability accumulates.

The implication of this fact for teachers is that writing must not be viewed as a cram course, to be inserted during a particular year or semester of a child's education. Instead, writing must be made a regular and natural part of children's education from their earliest experiences with formal schooling in the primary grades to their more narrow, subject-related explorations of knowledge in secondary schools.

This notion that writing ability develops gradually also has implications for what we do at various stages of children's writing development. Central to writing is practice, which means that children will learn to write as they have occasion to practice writing and to receive feedback in thousands of different contexts over many years. Fortunately, children need very little training to begin this practice. Because writing is built upon a language system which we learn very early, it can be undertaken even by primary age children. Young children do not need, for example, years of training in the grammar of the English sentence before they can write sentences. They do not need to have memorized all the uses of the comma before they can effectively use written language to express what they know and who they are.

The proper sequence for a writing curriculum, then, is not one of several years of language drills preceding actual writing practice. In this manual, even very young children undertake whole writing tasks. Writing is learned as students accumulate skill over many years of practice.

Because writing develops slowly with practice, the goal of making all students writers becomes the responsibility of all teachers both up and down, and across, the curriculum. A third assumption of this manual, then, is that to be effective, WRITING INSTRUCTION MUST BE A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY.

At the elementary level, this fact implies that teachers at all grade levels will be writing teachers. Further, it suggests that writing will be a regular part of a child's day, not only in the twenty or thirty minutes devoted to English instruction but also in all other subjects a child is being taught. Teachers in elementary grades, in other words, will recognize the inter-connectedness of school subjects and will realize in particular that writing is an important and valuable learning activity for science and social studies classes, and for lessons in mathematics and reading. They will look for occasions to use writing throughout the curriculum, realizing that writing practice will simultaneously help children learn other subjects and learn the craft of writing.

In junior high and high schools, of course, English teachers accept the primary responsibility for teaching writing. However, we believe that students will neither completely value nor sustain their competence in writing unless and until other than English teachers support the work we do. The ability to compose, to use writing effectively, to value and respect the uses of writing will emerge only when others (in both the school and community) support the teaching of writing, demand its practice, and enforce its expected standards.

What do Writing Across the Curriculum programs say about the teaching of writing? There are two directions implicit in such popular movements as these: one leading from the English classroom into such areas as science, history, and business, and one from the classrooms of other subjects into the English teacher's domain. In both cases, doors must be opened. Faculty members of other disciplines must begin to be aware of how writing can be built into their requirements and activities and what writing can do to develop understanding and knowledge on the part of the students of these disciplines. English teachers must take the initiative of sharing with others what they know about writing. The discussions and activities in this manual, for example, are designed to be shared with teachers of other disciplines and adapted to the other studies in school.

The fact that writing instruction is a shared

responsibility also has implications for the role of the community in promoting literacy. Students come to school with perceptions of the importance and value of writing given them in the home and community. Parents and role models in the community are powerful allies in the teaching of writing skills, but only if those models reinforce the importance of good writing. The responsibility of parents and community is twofold: making sure that schools do ask for writing and providing support in the homes by providing children with opportunities and incentives to read and write.

There are many roles parents and community can play in developing a strong writing emphasis in the schools, ranging all the way from knowing what schools expect, seeing to it that children have writing assigned, offering help when they can, and providing the kind of aid that fits with and supplements school instruction. Most importantly, the attitudes of parents and the community about the worth and viability of writing are most influential to students. Community recognition of high achievement in writing, parental reinforcement of the importance of writing, and both parents and community working with the schools to encourage and reward writing provide powerful aids to school writing programs.

No matter how many dedicated or knowledgeable teachers there are nor how much support community and school give to the teaching of writing, the success of instruction in composition rests ultimately with the students who are learning to write. The willingness of students to engage meaningfully in instruction, to expend the time and energy necessary to write, to overcome or work through the frustrations that are an integral part of the process of writing is what determines, in the long run, the success of the writing program. Our fourth assumption in Teacher to Teacher, then, is that IF THEY ARE TO LEARN TO WRITE, STUDENTS MUST COME TO VALUE WRITING. The benefits and outcomes of learning to write must be not only understood by students but also demonstrated clearly and actively by teachers who themselves are convinced of writing's value.

One way we can convince students of the value of writing is to show them that the ability to write is directly proportional to their chances for success in life. Writing bestows power upon students, giving them access to meaningful jobs, to further education, to economic and social advancement. As Edwin J. Delattre has said, those who are incapable of using language effectively will never be "insiders" who can control their own future; in fact, those without language skills often may not even realize that their

position "outside" literate society disenfranchises them severely (53-55).

What does this fact have to say about the teaching of writing? Simply that the value of writing to educational and economic advancement must be illustrated and modeled to students frequently. Writing assignments which demonstrate the demands of "real life" writing, testimony of those who can give examples of the importance of writing, and models of times when writing has affected public policy can be powerful incentives for student writers to view writing instruction seriously.

Of course, writing has benefits which go beyond its functional uses in our society. Although important, these functional uses are not the most cogent or compelling reasons for students to learn to write. In our teaching, we need to make clear the opportunity language skill gives as a creative activity. Opportunities for students to learn to "play" with language, to generate enthusiasm that comes from such play should be given to students. Nothing is more symptomatic of the attitude most students have about writing than their comment that they "have to" write papers, their negative views toward an activity that should be exciting. What we need as teachers of writing is to show students that writing can be an enjoyable creative activity, valued in and of itself.

Far more important than the power writing competence bestows in practical and creative concerns is the opportunity writers have to use the process of writing as an instrument for knowing, understanding, exploring, and controlling their worlds. Writing is a powerful, enabling, distinctively human activity, without which there is inadequate opportunity for students to make sense out of their world and their places in it.

The implications of this statement about the power of writing are awesome indeed, since it says that writing serves as the most powerful educational activity students have at their disposal. As teachers, we need to encourage students to use writing as a means of coming to know: to reflect, to question, and to learn. Sadly, opportunities for students to use writing as a way of learning are not as abundant as they should be, so it is incumbent upon us as writing teachers not only to provide them for our students, but to show others in other disciplines the possibilities writing holds.

The final two assumptions of Teacher to Teacher concern the role which assessment and evaluation play in writing

instruction. While it is true that writing is both a skill and an art, the often held belief that the artistic nature of writing makes it too personal or idiosyncratic to be evaluated fairly is not true. The characteristics of good writing are neither mysterious nor elusive. They can be described, and they can be recognized when they appear in student writing. Conversely, their absence can also be pointed out by an effective teacher. Students sometimes claim that they have received poor grades on their writing because their teacher "doesn't like my style," but the actual case is usually that the student has failed to meet the teacher's expectations and/or that the teacher has failed to communicate to the students what constitutes good writing. Reliable assessment is essential because it provides both students and teachers with the terms for discussing such issues.

Our fifth assumption, then, is that WRITING CAN BE RELIABLY EVALUATED. It is possible (and desirable), in other words, to agree on criteria for assessing pieces of writing and to apply those criteria consistently to the completed compositions of students.

Our final assumption, that A SHARED ASSESSMENT SYSTEM IS VITAL TO ANY INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM IN COMPOSITION, derives from the fifth. If we as teachers are to work together on improving students' writing, then we must agree on our conception of what good writing is. We must, in other words, share an understanding of our goals as teachers and an appreciation of what students at various grade levels can be expected to accomplish as they work toward meeting those goals. Such understanding and appreciation result from an assessment system which teachers have worked together to create and to follow.

Students do not become good writers unless they write extensively, but both research findings and the experiences of teachers bear out that writing alone, even a great deal of it, will not lead to improvement unless students are getting frequent response from readers. While peer response can be a valuable part of a student's progress toward better writing, the teacher is likely to be the student's most valuable source of "feedback."

Evaluation, in other words, is an inherent part of the writing process. Because evaluation is not an end in itself, a teacher's response to a student's work should form the base for the student's next writing efforts. A piece of writing, even when it is submitted for a grade, is never "finished." The student has merely stopped at a point in the development

of that particular piece, and the student has decided to go on to other writing projects. In a sense, all of a student's writing constitutes a single piece, and each time a teacher offers comments on one effort, the teacher is aiding the student in the development of the greater piece.

Response to a student's writing need not always be limited to grading. In fact, many teachers feel that only a small portion of a student's work--that portion which the student deems "ready for the final presentation to the world" should be graded. But teachers can always respond. They can first respond as readers. They can put aside the red pen and read, and then they can, verbally or in writing, inform students of their response. Teachers too often are hesitant to tell students of their responses, but students deserve to be told when they have delighted or moved or bored their teachers. And teachers, as best they can, need to explain to students what feature of the student's writing led to their responding as they did.

When writing is graded, teachers need to concentrate on those things which have been done well. Praise is necessary, and students need to be told why they are deserving of praise. "Fine job--keep up the good work" will do little to tell a student what went right. Likewise, covering a paper with red ink will do little to help the student understand what to do to get things right. Error finding is not evaluation, and it makes for poor grading. This does not mean that teachers should ignore error; it merely means that they should isolate and point out those errors which are keeping the student from developing as a writer. Students can easily be overwhelmed by too much response from a teacher. We know, in fact, that too much response causes students to ignore everything the teacher has to say. The paper that has been made to bleed with red ink is crumpled and tossed in the wastebasket.

Students do best when they are concentrating on a few aspects of their writing at a time, and they do best when they have a clear idea of the criteria that will be followed by their evaluator. Well-formulated writing assignments will usually imply the criteria by which the students' writing will be evaluated, but teachers can also list the criteria separately. The advantage of approaching writing through trait analysis, as we have done in our writing project, is that both the student and the teacher can work on one trait at a time. We realize that writing is not the mere compilation of discrete traits; it is, of course, an organic creation in which the creator is performing a number of intellectual and artistic tasks at once. However, for both

purposes of instruction and evaluation, approaching writing through trait analysis allows the student and teacher to know where to begin and where to go. Through trait analysis, the teacher can diagnose the student's writing, decide which trait or particular features within a trait are in need of development immediately. The others can wait--not because they do not matter, but because the student cannot possibly learn to improve everything at once. Approaching diagnosis in this way leads also to a simpler and more helpful approach to evaluation: the teacher limits evaluation to the tasks that have been set for the student. Of course, students need to be made to understand that the teacher is not evaluating the entire piece of writing.

If students do best when they understand the criteria by which they are evaluated, teachers also do their best when they understand the criteria by which their own work as teachers will be evaluated. They need to know what bases their school system will be using to evaluate student writing; teachers need to be involved closely in the formulation of policies and procedures for the assessment of student writing. This has been the case in our project. Teachers themselves have worked together to describe the traits of good writing, and they have committed themselves to teaching toward those traits. They know what is expected of them, and they are willing to meet the challenge.

Not only humane and helpful, but thoughtful and enlightened evaluation of writing is a crucial part of a teacher's responsibility. Approaching evaluation systematically makes the experience efficient and less dreaded than most teachers expect it to be. The second chapter of this manual discusses further how an assessment system can be used productively in a program of writing instruction.

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purposes
and
practices

ASSESSMENT: PURPOSES AND PRACTICES

If we ask a group of our colleagues what is troublesome to them about their responsibilities in the classroom, they are likely to reply, "I love to teach writing, but I hate having to evaluate it!" Yet we teachers understand that unless we have a chance to find out what students know after a unit of instruction, we have no assurance that our teaching has succeeded.

Part of the discomfort that teachers feel about evaluation comes, of course, from the demands it puts on time. But there is more to it than just that burden, which we English teachers somehow manage to cope with. The problem is that evaluation is a lonely, often frustrating experience, fraught with questions and doubts. We wonder if we are being too hard--or too easy--on our students. Did students fail to achieve on an assignment because we failed to teach in the right way? Or did we make an assignment that was unclear? Were our students just being lazy, or obstinate, or both? Have we been too demanding in relation to other teachers--or perhaps not rigorous enough to prepare our students for what they will have to do next year, or in the next school?

The dilemma is clear and familiar: we must evaluate in order to discover what we and our students need to be doing, yet we feel uncomfortable and insecure about setting standards for our students. We need to be assured that what we are asking students to do is reasonable and appropriate for our schools' and our departments' needs, but standards for us to follow are vague or completely absent. We need evaluation to help us shape our teaching day by day, to help us make selections from our textbooks, to frame realistic objectives; but we need direction on how to evaluate fairly and reliably.

It is perhaps some comfort to know that schools from their earliest years have struggled with the same question of how to evaluate the academic progress of their students. Interestingly, in the earliest days of public education in America, students were tested individually by "respected members of the community" in a five-minute oral examination to see if they were truly "literate" in language use. As early as 1845, however, educators, faced with increasing school populations, were struggling with ways of administering written examinations that could measure student ability in language and thus direct and inform instruction.

It was with the advent of the written examination that the problem of framing standards arose. Horace Mann, in the "Report of the Annual Examining Committees of the Boston Grammar and Writing Schools" wrote of the need for "common" standards: "If every man's foot," he said, "is to be taken as twelve inches long, it becomes an important question by whose foot we shall measure. So of the different standards of judging in the mind of different men" (qtd. in Greenberg, Wiener and Donovan 13). The latter nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were marked by repeated attempts to "objectify" writing and ease evaluation by reducing composition to a series of sub-skills (spelling, sentence grammar, vocabulary, etc.) which could be measured (even on a point scale ranging to 1000!) and added together to denote "competence" in writing. If nothing else, such attempts show that judging students' progress in writing was a priority, but there were serious problems with this reductive approach. Everything we know instinctively about the nature of writing says that a piece of writing is much more than the sum of its parts (its spelling, its sentences, its vocabulary, etc.). Its success is its "whole" effect: its ability to meet successfully its purpose for its audience. The problem with the quantitative approach, in particular, was that it led to the belief that we could measure accuracy in the sub-skills alone and use the results to ascertain "written competence."

Such atomization, of course, does not work. But the problem remained: how could large numbers of students be tested to find out what we had to know? "Holistic" evaluation, popularized in the twentieth century, provided a way for whole pieces of discourse to be rated on their "general impression" or total effect. Several assumptions lay behind the move toward holistic scoring for wide-scale testing: that a group of intelligent readers could come to very close agreement about compositions' success or failure, if those readers had in their minds prior to the reading a clear sense of the criteria for "success" or "failure." If, in addition, the papers were read at least twice by different "trained" readers (kept aware of the criteria by frequent reinforcement of them during the reading sessions), the readers' reliability was increased and the students' achievement levels could be validly and accurately judged. National testing services, like Educational Testing Service and the National Assessment of Education Progress, began to use holistic scoring for their wide-scale testing, and many colleges and universities incorporated it successfully in their procedures for placement of students in college composition classes.

Holistic scoring offers a way too for schools to do what

they have to do to strengthen their writing programs: assess the writing of all their students and then use the results to establish objectives and the standards by which to measure their accomplishment. It was exactly these two focuses that lay behind the inception of Project ARETE in the Youngstown and Mahoning County schools. The acronym we adopted reveals those two areas: Assessment and Revitalization Efforts for the Teaching of English. We began with assessment, looking to see what students could do in writing, but assessment was only the beginning (as it was only the first letter in a five-letter title). What assessment was to lead to was revitalization of teaching--strengthening of the total school program in writing. That might mean--and did mean, in fact, clarification of stated objectives for teaching English (i.e., a revised Course of Study); it might mean new teaching methods in the classroom (greater emphasis on various stages in the writing process and less emphasis on grammar drill and terminology); it might mean asking teachers to take a look at the time they were allotting to composition and asking them to do more integration of writing with other language learning; and it certainly meant that teachers should have an opportunity to come together, to talk, to share ideas and expectations. Assessment, in other words, was to be carried out, because we wanted to know what students could do and what they could not, but assessment was the beginning--never the end--of our activities.

This Teacher to Teacher manual, in fact, is the tangible result of the ongoing work of the project. It is both a discussion of what we are assessing and a resource to help teachers teach toward the goals stated as the qualities of writing we deem important. In order to see what those qualities are and why we consider them important, we need to review how Project ARETE members went about the development of the assessment practices, first in secondary school, and then later, in elementary and junior high.

When the English teachers who were ARETE participants first began to devise assessment procedures in the winter of 1984, they were convinced that some sort of "holistic" scoring should be used, since they wanted all students to compose full essays and holistic scoring offered a way to do the job in a manageable way. The first scoring of essays, about 2600 papers written by high school juniors in nineteen high schools, was done by simply ranking the papers on a scale of 1, 2, 3, or 4, based on judgments made by readers who had been provided with examples ("anchor papers") of low (1-2) through high (3-4) work. The "anchor papers" were discussed thoroughly by teachers before the reading sessions began. Two readers read and scored each paper, using codes

to preserve the anonymity of their ratings, and a third reader stepped in if the first two did not score alike. Reports and ranking of students were sent back to the schools for teachers' use and students' information.

Some very valuable things were learned from the testing: which students were in need of more concentrated work in composition, for example, and which students needed to enroll in courses that required writing practice, particularly if those students were college-bound. Often, too, we were able to identify students who were not performing (or being asked to perform) to the level of their capacities. More importantly, however, we learned from this initial assessment the intrinsic value of the assessment process itself. Because we had to come to a consensus before we scored essays, the sessions became valuable sharing experiences for us, giving us the chance to hear from each other about standards and expectations. That lonely feeling of isolation, the feeling of uncertainty and doubt about our own expectations and our schools'--fell away as teachers--high school and college together--talked about student writing.

As valuable as the experience was, however, the information which this first scoring gave us was minimal, and certainly more useful for placing students in appropriate courses than for changing our curricula or our teaching. What schools got back was a ranked list of student writers, arranged by their ability to handle in writing a certain topic at a certain point in their school career. But there was little indication of what qualities in writing needed to be worked on by a writer in order to raise a score from 3 to 4, or what particular thing about the piece of writing made it a clear 1 or 2. Since the ultimate use of assessment was to be improved instruction, more discrete information--information that told what needed to be taught to whom--was called for.

The Project ARETE "trait scoring" system--a descriptive, analytic scale--was developed to answer these practical concerns. Teachers began by taking numbers of papers that had been scored on a "general impression" scale and noting all the qualities that seemed to characterize their various levels of strength or weakness. For example, we asked what things about word use or sentence variety seemed to characterize "upper division" (3-4 level) work? What organizational strategies, or lack of them, were seen in 2-level papers? We asked ourselves if it were possible to categorize any of these specific qualities. If so, how many categories could be identified? and what did each include?

Over the course of at least four very intensive workshop sessions, twenty-five teachers sorted and categorized, defined and delineated, until we devised a guide which grouped qualities of writing (called "traits"); under five general headings: a sense of Purpose, the quality of Direction, the appearance and quality of Ideas, a sense of Style in language, and the writer's Presentation skills, those skills which conveyed the sense of the writer's care in editing and proofing the paper. Although we had access to several models (Diederich's seven-quality scale, for example), it was important--and necessary--for us to go through the difficult job of identifying, marking, and describing the traits of successful writing as we saw them. Like writing itself, the process of doing the work was as important as the product it brought forth, and because it was our own product, we had both a sense of ownership of it and responsibility for it. The value of our sharing our expectations was incalculable; our work proved, in fact, the truth of what the editors of Writing Assessment: Issues and Strategies have said: "... there are enormous benefits in developing a writing assessment test . . . as long as the effort involves faculty members sharing ideas and working toward common goals. Here is a case in which reinventing the wheel may be the best way to assure that the vehicle will run" (xiv-xv).

Most importantly, the trait scoring guide managed to provide a means for us to achieve the efficiency of holistic scoring (multiple, independent readings by "trained" readers, based on commonly held perceptions of performance levels in each of the five traits) and still derive information that could lead to instructional improvement.

The trait scoring guide was used in the spring of 1984 with a random sampling of papers to see if it worked as reliably as we hoped. Two readers read each paper, marking each of the five traits on a continuum of 1 to 7, following the characteristics of "high" (6-7), "middle" (3-4-5), or "low" (1-2) performance as outlined by us on our narrative scoring guide. We expected readers to agree within three points on the seven-point scale; if not, the paper went to a third reader for a new reading of the particular trait, and the score most widely divergent was replaced by the new one. With enough training and with reinforcement by viewing and discussing pre-selected sample papers, we kept third readings to a minimum (usually no more than 5% of the total). For reporting purposes, we averaged the two readers' scores. So that no bias was noted, we scored the papers with no names attached nor identification of schools, and we shuffled papers so that students were not grouped by classes or

teachers.

We were certainly gratified by what seemed to be the workability and adaptability of the trait-scoring system. Not only was it an efficient way to assess large numbers of papers (an important factor, given the stacks of essays that filled our offices), but it was also a help to our teaching. Because we asked teacher/readers to make judgments about a piece of writing in five different areas, our approach let us indicate to students (and to teachers and parents and administrators) just which things in writing were being done well and which were not. It gave teachers new information about the effectiveness of the instruction they had been offering, and so it seemed likely to lead to improved teaching and program design. The report forms were designed to give students information about these qualities in their writing--what things they seemed to have well in hand and what things they needed to work on. Teachers' reports gave for each class a summary of what students had succeeded in, and what areas obviously needed reinforcement, or review, or concentrated work. The potential for teachers and for those who are charged with curriculum and planning seemed good.

We certainly were not disappointed with what happened as we began to use trait scoring in 1985 and 1986. The assessment guide became the nucleus for in-service meetings, for curricular review, and above all, for the first edition of Teacher to Teacher, a manual designed to take the traits into the classroom situation by discussing each trait, providing examples of the trait in student writing, and outlining classroom activities which could be used to teach the behaviors and skills implicit in the traits. The manual was sent in the fall of 1985 to all high school teachers in our participating school districts.

What has happened since then has been the most exciting--and challenging--part of Project ARETE. Although originally, the project was geared toward secondary school writing, it was always the conviction of the project's teachers--a conviction shared by writing experts everywhere--that composition is an integral and necessary part of the school curriculum from kindergarten through graduate school, and that neglect of its importance through the school years was self-defeating. As we entered the latter phase of Project ARETE, we moved our attention and focus to composition at all levels of instruction. The question we faced was whether or not the writing of elementary children or junior high school students could be assessed by looking at the same qualities as those we had used for high school writing. Our instinctive reaction was

that it could be: that successful writing of developing writers, a fourth grader's, for example, had a clear sense of purpose, that it displayed a writer's control of the movement of the paper, that it had evidence of awareness of language as a medium, etc. We knew, given what we understood about language development in children, that stylistic features of language would, for example, not be as sophisticated in the work of younger writers as they would be later on, or that the quality of ideas would be more experiential and less analytic in the earlier grades. We assumed that there would be fewer of some skills, and a different level of accomplishment in the traits, but we hoped that the same qualities of effective writing might be displayed as we looked at the writing of children across the grades. We were not disappointed. What we were able to find out was that writers of all ages wrestle with the same rhetorical processes and make the same kinds of decisions, sometimes fortuitously, and sometimes not.

The chapters you are about to read in this revised and enlarged Teacher to Teacher manual comprise the heart of the continuing and expanded Revitalization Efforts of Project ARETE. Each chapter--written collaboratively by teams of high school, college, elementary, and junior high teachers--takes one of the five traits defined in the assessment scale as its focus. Discussing what it means to say that a paper displays or does not display a clear sense of purpose, a workable direction or sense of movement, interesting and adequate ideas, a sense of style, or successful editing and presentational efforts. In addition to the delineation of the trait, there is a discussion of how writers convey a sense of the quality being discussed as they develop their writing skills from grade school through high school. Because we believe that what we do should be informed by what we know about writing, there is a review of research for each trait. And most importantly, there are teaching strategies submitted by teachers from all grade levels, who want to share the ways they have of teaching the important qualities isolated and defined.

Opening up the ARETE project to elementary and junior high school teachers and students has had untold advantages. As we read and assessed the writing of fourth- and seventh-grade students and used our experiences to work on the manual, we began to see writing in a broader sense than we had before. We have enjoyed--and profited from--the advantage of participation with teachers of students at all grade levels--and have come to enjoy the chance of talking together, learning from each other, and seeing how writing develops and grows. That collaboration is mirrored in the

chapters that follow in this manual, for in them, teacher/authors--representing all the levels of instruction--talk about writing not just as a "subject" for a particular grade level, but also as an activity that permeates the school curriculum, an activity that affords children a powerful way to learn and to create.

As we have worked on this collaborative assessment project, we have had to face and solve many problems and engage in what has had both immediate and long-range benefits for the classroom. Take, for example, the matter of designing writing prompts for the assessment. If ever there were a clear indication of the care it takes to design a rhetorically rich assignment for students to write about, it was when teachers had to come up with topics for the assessment. The demands were great: topics had to fit the intellectual level of the students, to interest both the writers and the readers, to elicit information from all students, and above all, to assess the traits that we had identified. The necessity of precise, appropriate, clearly stated topics was certainly an indication to us of how carefully we also needed to frame our classroom writing assignments.

The most important thing we did in the Project, however, was engage in the writing process ourselves--to articulate ideas about writing, to clarify the activity for ourselves and for others through writing itself. None of the documents that are a part of Project ARETE (the scoring guides, for example, the instructions for administering the test, and above all, this manual) would have been produced if teachers had not engaged in the "writing process"--in the tasks of drafting, revising, responding to each other's work, and editing. When we wrote together, when we shared drafts and asked for our peers' responses, when we revised and edited for our audience's expectations, we were modeling the writing we teach--and thus learning to teach it more effectively. This manual, born out of the messy and often exasperating process of composing, is the product of true collaborative writing and learning.

This chapter began with the assertion that nothing is more frustrating to us as teachers than the feeling that we are alone in what we do. The advantage of collaboratively developed assessment procedures is that they work only when we come together--literally and figuratively--to discuss with each other and to grow from each other's expertise and experience. The chapters in this book are the products of our collaborative efforts, designed to extend the trait-scoring assessment procedures into the classroom, to

use the instruments developed for scoring as a way to talk about the teaching of writing. It is not enough to find out how students are doing in their writing; we must also use that information to make improvements in what we do in our classrooms and in our writing programs. We teacher/authors of Teacher to Teacher, hope that the following chapters will do just that.

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SCHOOL MAIL

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THE
TRAIT
OF

Purpose

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THE TRAIT OF PURPOSE

The Trait of Purpose: What Is It and What Does Research Say About It?

Purpose in writing means "what a writer intends to do." To compose with purpose, writers must, of course, identify not only the subject--pen pals, for example--but also what they have to say about the subject and a way they are going to say it, what Patrick Hartwell describes in Open to Language as the formative idea. To determine the purpose, a writer must analyze her audience: what do the readers know about the subject (a pen pal is--), and what attitudes do they hold toward that subject (good students have pen pals)? The writer must also determine what he knows about the subject and what his own attitudes are (pen pals are silly; I don't know anyone who has a pen pal, but characters in a story I read and in a movie I saw had pen pals). In other words, writing with a purpose means deciding what to do with a subject, given one's own knowledge and attitudes and those of one's readers. Purpose is expressed not only through the statement of the subject and attitude but also through the pattern of development, the content of the essay, and the words and sentence patterns; that is, through direction, ideas, and style. We teach students about purpose through both writing and reading, through writing for different audiences and through reading the essays of other students and those of professional writers.

Good writers make choices with their readers always in mind. They understand that audiences are different. Unfortunately, most students write only to their teachers, who, they feel, read their work looking for mistakes in grammar and punctuation. Teachers, they believe, count the number of words, are pleased when those words are big words, and like to be told what they already know. Since so much of our response to our students' papers consists of marking errors or noting when students are not accurate about information we have given them, their assumptions about the teacher as audience are based solidly on their experience. We may tell them we want them to pay attention to ideas and development, but we frequently do not convey the importance of what we say by the way in which we mark our students' papers. Small wonder that so much of the writing of students is dull, meaningless, and vacuous. To help students learn to write with purpose, we need to change the way we respond to their writing. We also need to have them write for different audiences. In other words, we need to help them become

conscious of audience and of the choices writers make, based on their assumptions or knowledge about an audience.

Giving assignments that identify different audiences for students to write for is one way in which we can teach students to master purpose in their writing, especially if we have given them help in analyzing an audience:

Who are the intended readers?
What do they already know about this subject?
What biases do they have about the subject?
What is the age or gender of my readers?
What particular interests do my readers have?
How can I capture their interest?
What reasons or examples can I use that will be appropriate for this audience?

Practice in analyzing audiences needs to be a part of prewriting activities and of the discussion of reading assignments. One might have students bring in different magazines or talk about the differences between "girls'" books or "boys'" books as ways of making students aware of how assumptions about an audience determine both content and style.

Having students write for each other and then for identified audiences outside the classroom develops in them a sense of the choices writers make when writing for different groups of people. The Youngstown Schools' project, "Write from the Heart," provides a good opportunity for students to practice writing for "real" but "different" audiences. Using partners or editing groups gives students practice as readers and leads them to become more conscious and critical readers of their own writing. Often middle school students and inexperienced writers begin a paper with their purpose clearly in mind but they become side-tracked and start to ramble. They lose their audience. Putting themselves in the place of the audience by acting as readers of their classmates' essays can help them see when they have lost their sense of purpose and have, at best, only a subject.

One of the seventh-grader's essays (Max's)* on his favorite way of relaxing illustrates a writer who has a subject but hasn't decided who his audience is and why he is writing: "When you run as often as I do, it becomes a habit. I'll usually run two to three miles a day. When you feel

*The paper written by this student and by any students whose names are asterisked in this chapter may be found in the Appendix, "Assessment: A Primer for Teachers" (see

Section on Anchor Papers).

under tremendous pressure, you run with a steadier pace. . . . Although the writer is describing his method of relaxing (running), he is not putting his ideas together coherently: he shifts person (from I to you) and one sentence seems unconnected with the next in spite of his use of transition words like when. (Again, students can be helped to learn about transitions and how to lead from one idea into another, one statement into another, by examining reading materials assigned in the classroom.)

While students need to determine what voice is "appropriate to the interests, maturity, and ability of an audience" (Lindemann 240), they must also decide if they have enough information to assume that voice, "to assume," as Lindemann says, "a role with respect to the audience" (209). (The seventh grader in the example cited had not analyzed himself as writer, nor could he comfortably assume a voice based on a self-examination.) And just as students need help in analyzing an audience, they need practice in determining what they know and believe about a subject. Brainstorming is a good prewriting activity to develop this skill, especially if questions are used to help a student explore a subject. As the students ask themselves questions to analyze the audience so, too, do they need to ask themselves questions about the subject:

What do I know?

What do I believe?

What experiences have I had or have my friends had that relate to the subject?

Have I watched a television show or read a book that focused on the subject or portrayed a fictional character's experience that is related to the subject?

The journalism questions of who? what? where? when? why? and how? can also be used to help students discover what they know about a subject and what additional information they may have to get before writing.

Teachers set the stage for the type of writing they will receive. Purpose begins with the development of a clear, focused topic. The teacher guides this development by giving clear directions, while leaving options open to the students for development. Many students present no purpose because they do not know enough about their subject or because the assignment is not clear. As teachers, we need to be aware

that assignments should be challenging but not too difficult for the students' levels of understanding. Topics such as "should high school athletes be tested for drugs?" "Washing windows isn't hard at all," and "To cook pancakes, here's what you do" have very clear purposes to follow. "Write a paper about teenage drug abuse" is much too broad and confusing to be a good assignment.

As teachers writing the writing assignment, we, too, need to ask ourselves questions that will focus both the context and form of the assignment (see attached appendix for "When the Composition Teacher Composes: Writing the Writing Assignment"). The formula--Imagine that you are _____. Write a(n) _____ to/for _____ about _____. Your purpose is to _____. is useful as a guide to ensuring that we have thought about the problems of voice, form, audience, topic, and purpose that our students must deal with in composing their essays. Teachers should also check to be sure students have understood written directions. One teacher, after the class has had a chance to read a writing assignment, has all the students state what they are expected to do to fulfill the assignment. "Misreading" the assignment ("Describe one of your special places") seems to be the problem of a fourth-grade student (Ralph*) who wrote on two places rather than one. This observation is somewhat confirmed by numerous surface errors in the essay that indicate a poor reader.

The interests of student writers play a major part in writing with a purpose. Writers with neutral feelings about a subject tend to have little focus in their writing. They jump from one idea to another and may even contradict themselves. Evidence of this is found in a fourth grader's essay about her favorite place. Beth* writes, "My favorite place to go is to my room. . . . When I get board again I go back into my room. If I really get board I go outside. My dog will want me to play with him or pet him." Little time was spent on describing why her room was her favorite place. Instead, she jumped around with her ideas and in the essay actually focused predominantly on her dog. Apparently this writer had neutral feelings about her room and was just trying to think of something to say. She, like many other writers, wished to fulfill only one purpose--getting the assignment done on time. Students should be taught to write what they really feel: "my favorite place is anywhere my dog is."

An example of how much more focused writing is when the writer has a strong interest in or feeling about the subject

is the essay by Amy*. Amy, describing her favorite way to relax, displays a strong, positive feeling in her writing: "When I read, I feel like I'm in another world. The books I read keep me in suspense, wondering what will happen next! As I read on, I get absorbed in the book and I never want to put it down." Amy's writing fulfills a clear purpose--telling the audience why reading is enjoyable for her. Another piece of writing with a clear purpose tells the audience why a spot behind a red barn is a fourth grader's favorite place (Jim's*): "I like to go there because its fun to be alone. . . I like it when the wind blows and the trees sway back and forth. Sometimes I feel that the trees and animals can talk to me or do talk to me." This writer was not afraid to let his true feelings be known. He brought imagination into his writing in a believable way, and purpose is apparent even in his conclusion: "It's the funnest, quietest, prettiest place in my yard."

Writers who know their subject and know what they want to say about it tend to get a point across to the reader, whether their view is positive or negative. The point of view remains apparent throughout the entire piece of writing. This makes the writing meaningful in some way to both the writer and his audience. After all, isn't "meaning" what "purpose" is all about?

How Does the Trait of Purpose Develop in Student Writing?

Some examples of students' work in the recent ARETE Writing Projects for eleventh, seventh, and fourth grades illustrate the development of this trait. When eleventh graders were asked to discuss the various things people collect and their reasons for collecting them, one writer assumed the persona of a somewhat naive admirer of Rob, a collector of cockroaches, and presented his reader with the mock drama of the student whose "dark and mysterious side" led him to collect five million cockroaches, "all trained as well as any dog," and to eventually become the sole owner of the "Cockroach Follies." The writer's use of humor and hyperbole suggest great skill as a writer; his successful satire was also owing to his assigning a purpose of entertaining a reader who would be prone to recognize his purpose and credit his skill, all the more remarkable since the topic assigned (describe a collection you have or someone you know has) had no specified audience.

Collecting as a passion is evident in all walks of life, all types of people--from New York to San Francisco,

from London to Tokyo, collecting is evident everywhere. In fact, there is probably one collector for every two people on our block. Take Rob for example.

Rob is an average high school student. He likes reading, sports, drama, and is involved in various school organizations. He does well in his classes and usually makes the honor roll. But, there is another side to Rob that not many know of: a side that is dark and mysterious, a side that collects and breeds the collection, a side that is only Rob's, a side that has a passion for cockroaches.

Rob's cockroach days started a few years back when his older sister went away to college and Rob got his sister's attic bedroom. As soon as he moved in, he noticed one single cockroach half dead on the windowsill. Rob approached cautiously and carefully and managed to nurse the cockroach back to health. From then on, Rob's life has been filled with cockroaches.

Rob still has that one cockroach he once saved. And [added to] that, he also has 5,000,000 more, all trained as well as any dog. Rob has made a business of his cockroaches. He owns the world's only "Cockroach Follies" and he trains cockroaches as pets for unfortunates who live in the ghettos. In fact, Rob already has three bank accounts before he has even graduated! Maybe he's got something there. If he can collect cockroaches maybe we can collect . . .

Comparing the responses of seventh graders who were asked to describe a place or activity that they use as a way of escape underscores the importance of giving students experience in analyzing both themselves and their audience. One student (see Amy*, 7th grade) apparently designated the teacher as her sole audience since no other reader was specified. She chose to discuss reading as her escape mechanism, and in explaining how reading provided her with relaxation and enjoyment, she discussed such elements as setting, characterization and suspense. She approached her subject so as to reflect knowledge that would impress the

teacher. Although this writer would have improved her paper vastly by using examples from her own reading experience, the student did present a focused essay with subject matter appropriate to her audience.

Another writer (Max*) who responded to the same question discussed jogging as his method of escaping and relaxing. However, the paper lacked focus and the sense of a specific audience. The writer often wanders from discussing the beneficial results of jogging in a stressful world to a litany of do's and don't's for the beginning jogger. In shifting his point of view indiscriminately throughout the paper, he gives the impression of a writer in search of an audience. His comments on the suitable strategies for the beginning runner do not lapse into jargon, and one is left with the impression that the writer merely needs some instruction in making pre-writing decisions about audience and what really interests him about jogging.

In another essay, a fourth grader (Jim*) whose subject was to describe to a friend a place where he liked to go when he wanted to be alone, described an area in his own yard, not too big and not too small, where he enjoyed a world of rabbits and breezes and raspberries. The description was charming and convincing, and he presented a strong case for retreating from the world at times. Occasionally, however, he mentioned a friend named Julie. No further details were given about Julie; there seemed to be an assumption that his reader/friend would know exactly who Julie is. When he describes himself adventuring into the woods, he is almost defensive--"I love it back there 'cause I can go into the woods (just a little bit) and make trails." His parenthetical phrase seems to repeat a response to a warning that both he and his friend have heard before. The writer of this essay is undoubtedly observant and skillful in reporting his observations. However, it is worth noting that his assignment has a stated purpose and audience. We teachers must learn to present assignments with this precision, being certain that our students understand why and how they can focus on a subject through an examination of themselves as writers on a particular subject and an examination of the audience they are writing for.

All writers, as Wayne Booth has observed, must seek "a proper balance among the three elements that are at work in any communication effort: the available arguments about the subject itself, the interests and peculiarities of the audience and the voice, and the implied character of the speaker (139-140). The success or failure of students in achieving and maintaining this balance may be determined by a

variety of circumstances, including their opportunities or lack of opportunities to write for different audiences and different purposes; their awareness of the interrelationship among voice, purpose, and audience and how this interrelationship affects content, style, and direction; and finally students' ability to make pre-writing decisions on these rhetorical elements. Continued focus on these rhetorical elements in both the reading and writing assignments of the students will help them to understand that direction, ideas, and style, and sometimes even surface features like punctuation will vary according to their analysis of audience and writer in determining the purpose of a piece of writing.

APPENDIX

WHEN THE COMPOSITION TEACHER COMPOSES: WRITING THE WRITING ASSIGNMENT

Writing assignments is not only a necessary but a very important task for teachers, because often teachers write the topics for their students hurriedly or unwisely, and then wonder why students' performance on the writing is so dismal. Basically, what we do when we construct writing tasks for our students is present them with rhetorical problems to solve--rhetorical problems that can be a rich opportunity for students to vary their writing for different purposes, audiences, and roles as writers. Erika Lindemann in her text, A Rhetoric for Writing Teachers, points out that what we present to students as "writing assignments" poses for them the same problems any writer has who sets off to do the writing task: define the writer's relationship with the subject and the reader, in light of the purpose of the piece of writing.

Dr. Lindemann says writers find themselves answering questions such as "Who am I writing for and what response am I trying to effect in my reader? Is my audience predisposed toward reading what I have to say on this subject? What do I know about my subject? How do I feel about it? Can I commit myself to addressing it honestly? What angle or point of view can I take in treating the topic? Of course, writers also juggle other constraints: a deadline for the assignment, the demands of a form (letter, essay, report), and an aim (persuasive, referential, self-expressive, literary), and a mode (classification, narration, description, evaluation)." Lindemann continues by pointing out that we as teachers introduce students to what writers do by making our writing tasks for them rich in the same possibilities. In fact, "[e]ffective writing assignments," she maintains, "encourage students to define progressively more complex rhetorical problems. Since students learn to write by writing, our responsibility is to control and vary the rhetorical relationships among writer, reader, and subject, manipulating more and more complex variables" (205).

A FORMULA FOR WRITING WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

There are two major things to remember about writing assignments: that they should grow out of a context or

meaningful experiences that the student has had or will have, and that each assignment should give students some direction about the purpose of the task, the audience they are to address, the form the product should take, and the voice they should assume as they address purpose and audience. In order to write a good writing assignment, then, the teacher should keep in mind two sets of questions:

1. Questions on Context for the Assignment:

What has motivated this writing task? What lessons or experiences, for example, have prepared students for it? What future events or areas of study does the writing assignment anticipate? For example, the teacher might say, "For the past two weeks, we have been reading and studying about _____" or "Yesterday, you saw a film on _____" or "Tomorrow we will be going on a field trip to _____" or "Next week is the beginning of the _____ holiday."

2. Questions on Form of the Assignment:

A complete writing assignment gives students instruction about voice, form, audience, topic, and purpose. The questions pertinent to each are:

1. Voice: This tells the student what his perspective should be on this topic. How should he look at it? What should be his point of view? Who should he or she be as the writer of this paper?

2. Form: What kind of writing should this be: narrative, description, a story, a report, a letter, a memo, an informal note, a formal essay, etc.?

3. Audience: For whom is this writing intended: friend, parent, relative, character in a story, person or group in the community, a "general audience," a teacher, etc.?

4. Topic: What is the subject of this writing? In other words, what is it about?

5. Purpose: Why is this being written? The purpose is often stated in an infinitive verb form: to explain, to inform, to persuade, to entertain, to ask, to thank, etc.

The following formula is a simple way of giving students the essential information they need to do what is expected of them:

(Imagine) that you are _____ (1) . Write a(n) _____ (2)
_____ to/for _____ (3) about _____ (4) . Your
purpose is to _____ (5) .

(Please be aware that you do not have to word the assignment in this formulaic way!)

SOME FURTHER QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

As teachers are writing the assignments from which their students will work, they may find it useful to ask themselves such questions as the following:

1. What do I want the students to do? Is it worth doing? Why? What will the assignment tell me about what they've learned? How does it fit my objectives at this point in the course? Does the assignment assess what students can do or what they know? Am I relating their work to the real world (including academic settings) or only to my class or the text? Does the assignment require specialized knowledge? Does it appeal to the interests and experiences of my students?

2. How do I want them to do the assignment? Are students to work alone or together? In what ways will they practice prewriting, writing, and rewriting as they do the assignment? Are writing, reading, speaking, and listening reinforcing each other? Have I given students enough information to make effective choices about the subject, purpose, form, and mode?

3. For whom are students writing? Who is the audience? Do students have enough information to assume a role with respect to the audience? Should I provide them with knowledge about audience?

4. When will students do the assignment? How does the assignment relate to what comes before and after it in the course? Is the assignment sequenced to give enough time for prewriting, writing, and rewriting? How much time in and outside of class will students need for each stage? To what extent will I guide the students' work? What deadlines do I want to set for collecting the students' papers (or various stages of the writing project)?

5. What shall I do with the assignments? How will I evaluate the work? What constitutes a "successful" response to the assignment? Will other students or the writer have a say in evaluating the paper? What problems did I encounter if I tried to respond to the assignment? How can I improve the assignment?

(Material adapted from Lindemann 208-09)

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TEACHING PURPOSE

THE WHO GAME

PURPOSE: To teach students the concepts of voice and audience in writing.

PREPARATION: Compose several short pieces, based on common fairy tales, in which a character is speaking to another character in the story.

Examples:

1) You frightened me when you came to our nursery to look for your shadow. But I really enjoyed flying to Never Never Land and meeting the "Lost Boys." I did not enjoy meeting Captain Hook. I hope you come back to visit us one day.

2) Since you are only my stepdaughter, don't even think of going to the Prince's Ball. You'll never be done with all the chores I gave you. Besides, my two beautiful daughters will be going, and the Prince will surely fall in love with one of them.

Other examples: from Jack and Jill
from Snow White to one of the Dwarfs
from Grandmother to Red Riding Hood, etc.

PRESENTATION: Read several of the letters in class as examples. Have the children guess who is writing to whom.

Divide class into groups. Have children work on separate letters. Report the results to the class.

As a follow-up activity, have children compose letters, using the "voice" of a character they select.

SOURCE: Mary E. Davis
New Middletown Elementary School



ELEMENTARY ♦

TEACHING PURPOSE

THE STORY CIRCLE

PURPOSE: To teach children focus and a sense of purpose in writing.

PREPARATION: Divide class into groups of about five. Ask the children to sit in circles.

Prepare enough "story starters" so that each group has a different one. "Story starters" are one-line openers that can begin a story: i.e., "It was a dark and stormy night, when suddenly I saw _____." or "It was a very, very good day until _____."

Give each member of a circle a piece of paper with the "story starter" at the top.

PRESENTATION: Each student in the circle finishes the sentence. After several minutes of writing time, ring a bell or clap your hands as a signal that each student should pass the paper to the person on his/her right. That person reads the sentence and adds one more sentence. Keep going until each person has his/her own paper back. Read the stories aloud.

If there is time, you can go around the circle twice. Each story circle can then share the story they like best with the class.

SOURCE: The Purpose Group



ELEMENTARY ♦

TEACHING PURPOSE

LET'S ASK A QUESTION!

PURPOSE: To teach children to ask appropriate questions about a subject as a prewriting activity.

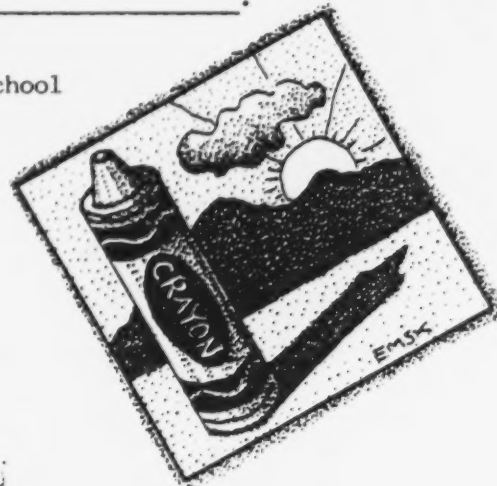
PREPARATION: Invite someone to come to your classroom to be interviewed by the children about the person's job. You might consider asking the school librarian, the school counselor, the janitor, or someone like a firefighter, a police officer, the mayor, etc. Explain to the person that the children will want to find out about his or her job.

Before the visitor comes, have children generate questions that focus on the person's occupation or job. (e.g., What do you do on your job? Why did you decide to become a _____? What do you have to study to be a _____?, etc.) Make sure all the questions relate to the person's job.

PRESENTATION: Have the children interview the person. Then have each child (or group of children if you set this up as a group writing project) write a short report on "Being a _____". Hang the reports on the bulletin board, or put together in a book.

It would be nice, too, to have the class compose a thank you letter to send to the person who came. Each child could contribute a sentence explaining what he or she learned about being a _____.

SOURCE: Mary C. Rosa, Madison School



ELEMENTARY ♦

TEACHING PURPOSE

CLIFFHANGERS

PURPOSE: To have students compose a conclusion for a story.

PREPARATION: Read to the class an exciting story. Just before the ending of the story, stop reading and discuss with the students how they would end the story.

PRESENTATION: 1) Give the students a story without the resolution. In groups, have them make up the ending. Share the stories, and compare their versions with the original.

2) Have students write original stories on a piece of paper, and have them stop before ending it. Then have them attach their stories to a coat hanger. Each student will pick a story, complete it, and hang it back up.

SOURCE: Adapted from idea in Livewire.



TEACHING PURPOSE

FIND THE "X" SENTENCES

PURPOSE: To teach children that all sentences in a well-constructed paragraph must relate to the topic of the paragraph.

PREPARATION: Write simple paragraphs of 6-7 sentences. Put each sentence on an index card. Write on cards several sentences that do not fit the topic. Put all the cards in an envelope.

PRESENTATION: Divide the class into groups of 4-5 students. Give each group an envelope and instruct them to find the sentence(s) that do not belong in the paragraph. Have them explain why they would not want to include the sentences.

Exchange the envelopes around the room so that all groups do all the paragraphs. Compare the results.

SOURCE: Mary E. Davis, New Middletown Elementary School



ELEMENTARY ♦

TEACHING PURPOSE

PICTURE PERFECT

PURPOSE: To get students to understand that when we compose, we put together things that are related.

PREPARATION: Bring to class a number of pictures or magazines from which students can cut pictures. Supply scissors, paste, large sheets of paper.

Divide class into groups of 3-4 students.

PRESENTATION: Assign each group a topic: "Fun Outside," "Animals," "Faces of Children," "Things that Make Me Happy," etc.

Ask students to make a collage from the pictures they can find in their materials. Students should be able to tell why they picked the pictures they did.

Display the collages in the room.

SOURCE: The Purpose Group



TEACHING PURPOSE

WRITING THE WRITING ASSIGNMENT

PURPOSE: To help teachers generate writing assignments that have a purpose and audience.

PREPARATION: Use any topic, poem, or piece of literature. See sample, "Sing a Song of Sixpence," on attached worksheet.

Brainstorm:

- 1) All the people you can think of connected with the work.
- 2) All the places/things you can think of connected with the work.

PRESENTATION: Use the simple formula for generating writing assignments (see Appendix to chapter on "The Trait of Purpose") to generate assignments.

**ADDITIONAL
COMMENTS:**

This activity can, of course, be used at any level, depending upon the topic/source used.

SOURCE: Gary Salvner, Youngstown State University



6 1/2

WORKSHEET FOR WRITING THE WRITING ASSIGNMENT

TOPIC

SING A SONG OF SIXPENCE

Sing a song of sixpence,
A pocket full of rye;
Four and twenty blackbirds,
Baked in a pie.

The king was in the counting-house,
Counting out his money;
The queen was in the parlour,
Eating bread and honey.

When the pie was opened,
The birds began to sing;
Wasn't that a dainty dish,
To set before the king?

The maid was in the garden,
Hanging out the clothes,
When down came a blackbird
And pecked off her nose.

BRAINSTORMING

<u>PEOPLE</u>		<u>PLACES/THINGS</u>	
royal cook	king	sixpence	queen's chambers
servants	queen	rye	bread and honey
ladies-in-waiting	maid	blackbirds	royal clothes
royal treasurer	court surgeon	pie	nose
maid's mother or father	diet counselor	food	crown
queen's brother	scrubwoman	counting-house	royal treasury
or sister	court jester	royal kitchen	dining room
prince or princess	traveling minstrel	parlour	royal throne
	royal musician	garden	sheet music

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

1. Imagine that you are the royal cook. Write an article for Royal Gourmet cooking magazine about your magic blackbird pie. Your purpose is to reveal the secret of the singing blackbirds in the pie.
2. Imagine you are the queen. Write an entry for your diary about the day's happenings.
3. Imagine you are the court surgeon. Write a report for the royal medical files about the surgery you performed this afternoon on the maid who lost her nose. Your purpose is to explain the condition of the patient when she was brought in and what you did to help her.
4. Imagine that you are the king. Write a memo to the royal treasurer about the shrinking gold reserves in the royal treasury. Your purpose is to learn where the money has gone.
5. You are the royal treasurer. Write a reply to the king's memo in #4 above.
6. Imagine you are one of the blackbirds in the pie. Write a letter to a fellow blackbird in which you explain what you went through in being baked in a pie and then released.
7. Imagine you are one of the blackbirds in the pie. Write a letter to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals complaining of the treatment of blackbirds in the kingdom.

TEACHING PURPOSE

WHAT SHALL WE CALL IT?

PURPOSE: To help students discover and discern a central focus or idea.

PREPARATION: Bring large, colorful pictures to class. (Good sources are magazines like National Geographic, or Smithsonian, or ads.)

Bring several that have titles, to use as samples. For example, show the class a copy of Homer Winslow's "Crack the Whip" or Gainsborough's "Blue Boy."

PRESENTATION: Discuss first why students think the artists would have called their picture what they did.

Divide the class into pairs. Give each pair of students a picture. They should devise a title for the picture. Display the titles and the pictures on the bulletin board.

SOURCE: The Purpose Group

MIDDLE SCHOOL



TEACHING PURPOSE

LETTER PERFECT

PURPOSE: To direct the student's writing to appeal to a particular audience.

PREPARATION: Discuss the difference in format for friendly letters and formal letters. Through the reading of examples, point out the difference in sentence structure, choice of vocabulary, and style.

PRESENTATION: Allow each student time to brainstorm individually those personality characteristics, family traits, experiences, hobbies, and skills that are unique and special to him/her.

You have two letters to write, using any of the brainstormed information.

1. Your parents have just been notified that because of unusual circumstances a distant cousin of yours is going to come from California and move in with you for an extended period of time. Since he is the same age as you are, your parents have asked you to write him a letter. Your purpose is to tell him about yourself, your school, and your family, and reassure him that since you are really an "OK" sort of person, he will be happy here.
2. You have just learned of an opening for a junior counselor at a really neat summer camp. The job pays quite well, and you really want it. The camp director is a professor of English at a local junior college. Write him a letter applying for the job. Your purpose is to convince him that you are the best possible candidate for the job.

SOURCE: Marilyn Samuels, Western Reserve Middle School



TEACHING PURPOSE

NEWSPAPER SEARCH

PURPOSE: To identify the different purposes of newspaper writing.

PREPARATION: Bring to class four or five different newspapers.

PRESENTATION: Divide class into groups of 4-5. Give each group a newspaper. Have them find examples in the issue of pieces that have different purposes (information, persuasion, opinion, etc.) These could be letters to the editor, feature stories, informational or factual news stories, editorials, ads, etc.

Students should clip out stories and be prepared to make an oral presentation of their findings to the class.

Students could also prepare written summaries of their findings and make into a poster.

SOURCE: The Purpose Group



TEACHING PURPOSE

WHO READS WHAT?

PURPOSE: To sharpen audience awareness of students.

PREPARATION: Bring copies of different magazines to class (e.g., MS, Field and Stream, Reader's Digest, Time, McCall's, Seventeen, etc.)

PRESENTATION: Divide class into groups. Give each group two or three magazines. Have them look through the copies to determine the magazine's audience. Prepare short written descriptions of the audience.

SOURCE: The Purpose Group

MIDDLE SCHOOL ♦♦



TEACHING PURPOSE

KNOW THE KEY WORDS

PURPOSE: To help students discern the intended purpose of an essay topic.

PREPARATION: Prepare a handout (see worksheet) with the most commonly used words found in essay questions/topics. Discuss the words and what they would suggest for essay development.

PRESENTATION: Work in groups for this activity. Give each group a topic such as "Sports," or "Homework," or "Holidays." Ask them to devise essay topics using 3 or 4 of the key words on the list. Share their topics on overhead or the blackboard.

Then have the children bring in writing topics they have devised. Have them exchange topics with another class member. Evaluate how easy/hard/confusing/clear, etc. the topic was to write on.

SOURCE: The Purpose Group

MIDDLE SCHOOL



WORKSHEET
FOR KNOW THE KEY WORDS

KEY INSTRUCTIONAL WORDS - ESSAY EXAMS

- Compare When you are asked to compare, you should examine qualities, or characteristics, in order to discover resemblances. The term compare is frequently used, and it implies that you are to emphasize similarities, although differences may be mentioned. Sample: In what ways are watching a TV program and watching a movie alike? Compare what you do on Saturday with what you do on school days?
- Contrast When you are instructed to contrast the dissimilarities, differences or unlikenesses of associated things, qualities, events, or problems should be stressed. Sample: How is a holiday different from an ordinary day? Contrast the food you get at two fast-food restaurants.
- Define Definitions call for concise, clear, authoritative statements of meanings. As you define, keep in mind the class to which a thing belongs and whatever differentiates the particular object from all others in the class. For example, a car is in the "class" of motorized vehicles, but it is "differentiated" from airplanes by the fact that it travels on land. Sample: How would you define "friendship"?
- Describe In a descriptive answer, you should recount, characterize, sketch, or relate in narrative form. Sample: How would you describe this room?
- Discuss The term discuss, which appears often in essay questions, directs you to examine, analyze carefully, and present considerations pro and con regarding the problems or items involved. This type of question calls for a complete and detailed answer.
- Enumerate The word enumerate specifies a list or outline form of reply. In such questions you should recount, one by one, in concise form, the points required. Sample: Enumerate the parts of the word processor.
- Explain In explanatory answers, it is imperative that you clarify, elucidate, and interpret something you know about or know how to do. Sample: How do you make a model? wash a dog?
- Outline You should give main points and essential supplementary materials, omitting minor details, and present the information in a systematic arrangement or classification.
- Summarize When you are asked to summarize or present something you have read or heard, you should give in condensed form the main points or facts. Sample: What happened in this story?

TEACHING PURPOSE

SAY IT AGAIN, SAM

PURPOSE: To adapt the same material to a variety of different purposes.

PREPARATION: Find in your literature text or duplicate copies of poems like "The Cremation of Sam McGrew," "The Highwayman," "Casey at the Bat," etc. Look for narrative poems.

PRESENTATION: Have the students read the poem and ask them to

1. write the poem as a news story of the event
2. turn the poem into a prose narrative
3. take the part of one of the characters in the poem and write a journal entry he/she would have written.

SOURCE: The Purpose Group

MIDDLE SCHOOL



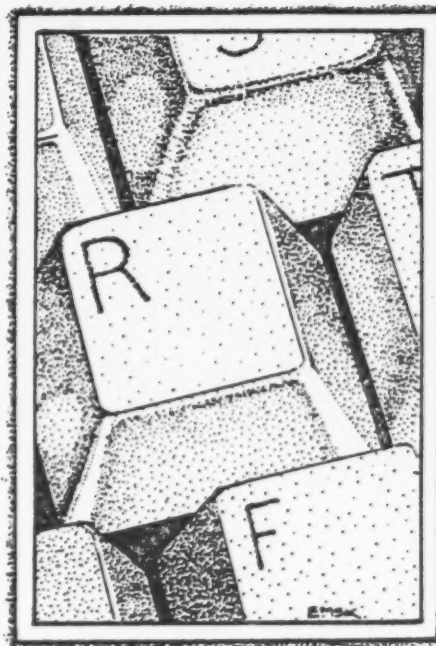
TEACHING PURPOSE

CHANGING VOICE

PURPOSE: To make students aware of the different ways they would present the same material to different audiences.

PREPARATION: Duplicate or be prepared to read the following to your students:

PRESENTATION: You have just recently received your driver's license. You got permission from your parents to use the family car, a 1987 Cadillac, but unfortunately, through your own carelessness, you put a large dent in the fender.



You have three pieces to write.

- A. Your father is out of town, and you must write to him (and you know how unhappy he will be) telling him what happened. You must admit that the accident was your fault, but you want to aim for his understanding and forgiveness.
- B. You had earlier promised your friends that you would be able to provide rides in the family car so that you all can go to the game this weekend. Write to your friends, explaining why you will no longer be able to drive them. You must not lie about the reason you cannot drive.
- C. One of the conditions your parents have given you is that you write a letter to your driver's education instructor explaining what you have learned from this unhappy incident.

Variation: Instead of having the students write, assign specific students the roles of parents, driving instructor, peers, and have students explain orally what happened.

SOURCE: The Purpose Group

TEACHING PURPOSE

SWITCHING ROLES

PURPOSE: To have students assume different roles in a writing situation.

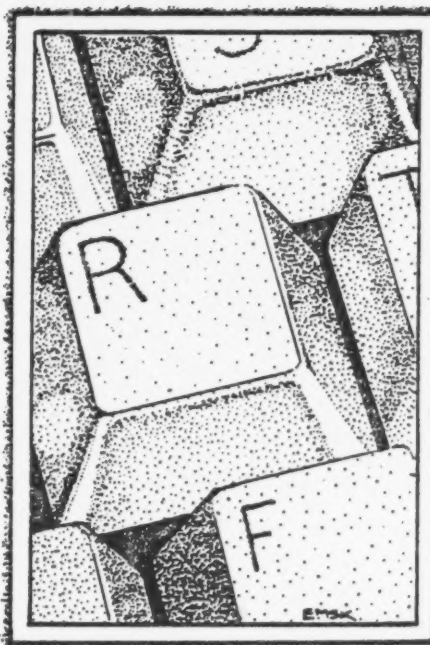
PREPARATION: Generate a list of situations that would lead students to write letters of complaint. For example, one student might have bought a sweater and discovered that one sleeve is three inches shorter than the other. He is to write a letter of complaint to the store. Another student might have purchased a record at a local record store, only to discover it has a flaw in it that causes the needle to stick.

PRESENTATION: Have each student write a letter of complaint to the store or to the person who is responsible for the problem. Allow about 15 minutes for this activity.

Then have students exchange letters. The students are then to assume the roles of the persons to whom the letters were addressed (the manager of the record store, for example, or the manufacturer of the sweater). The student is now to write a response in the persona of the person. Remember that the person here must be polite and accommodating!

Students should then return the letter to the sender, who will evaluate its effectiveness.

SOURCE: The Purpose Group



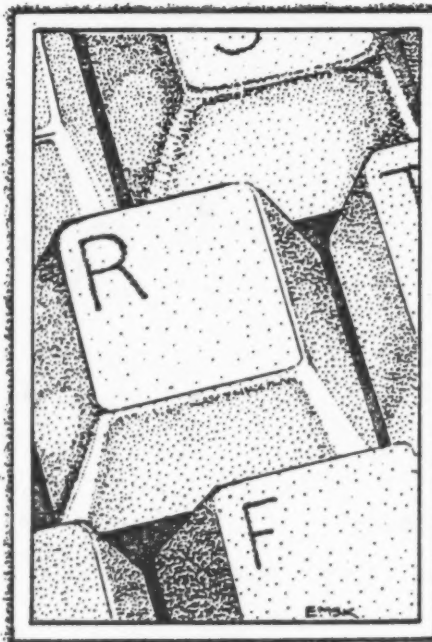
TEACHING PURPOSE

HARD SELL

PURPOSE: To make the student aware of ranging audiences; to direct his writing to appeal to a particular audience.

PREPARATION: Make copies of the accompanying work-sheet.

PRESENTATION: Instructions for students:



Given the facts below, write a paragraph in which you turn the implied disadvantage into an advantage. Identify the audience you are writing for.

Example 1: A rent-a-car company that is #2 in national business.

Paragraph would be directed to businesspeople and others who often rent cars, implying that because the company is not the top renter of cars, the company will "try harder" to succeed.

Example 2: A toy that has many pieces and comes un-assembled.

Paragraph might be directed to parents with young children. One point might be that the child will learn something valuable by having to put the toy together. Another point might be that having to assemble the toy with the child might provide parents a chance to work with their children.

SOURCE: The Purpose Group

WORKSHEET

FOR

HARD SELL

1. A home located away from any major thoroughfare
2. An airline that flies only between New York and Chicago
3. A retailer who offers no credit to shoppers
4. A car whose maximum speed is 60 m.p.h.
5. A mouthwash that tastes bad
6. A toothpaste that is dark blue
7. A magazine you can buy only at a newsstand
8. A novel with 1800 pages
9. A house with a leaky roof
10. An office for rent with no windows
11. A newspaper that has no comics
12. A soup that smells bad but tastes good
13. A perfume that changes scents
14. A pair of shoes that squeak
15. A chair that looks good but is uncomfortable to sit on

TEACHING PURPOSE

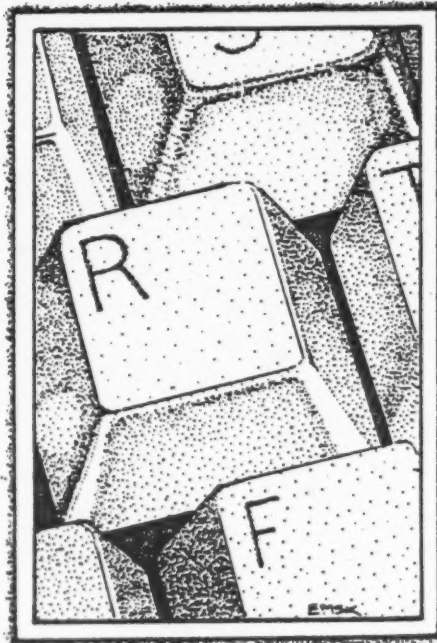
ANALYZING PURPOSE

PURPOSE: To provide students with an opportunity to identify the "ingredients of purposeful writing" by analyzing a selected example of professional writing.

PREPARATION: Duplicate the attached worksheets (and example to be examined, if necessary).

PRESENTATION: Have the students complete the worksheets by answering the questions as they apply to the selected example.

SOURCE: The Purpose Group



WORKSHEET I FOR ANALYZING PURPOSE

Explanation: Purpose in an essay, article, or letter answers several questions: who, what, to whom, under what circumstances, why, for what purpose, and how?

Directions: Analyze the assigned example of writing by answering these questions about the "ingredients of purposeful writing."

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| (WHO) | 1. Identify the WRITER/speaker/persona/voice (NOT the author!). Who seems to be writing to us; what kind of person? |
| (WHAT) | 2. Identify the SUBJECT/topic of the writing. What is the writer talking about? |
| (TO WHOM) | 3. Identify the AUDIENCE. Whom does the writer seem to be writing for; what sort of reader would care about this subject? |
| (UNDER
WHAT CIR-
CUMSTANCE) | 4. Identify the SITUATION. What's going on that leads to this writing? |
| (WHY) | 5. Identify the overall PURPOSE. Why did the writer take time to write about this subject; what's important about it; what's the main point? |
| (FOR WHAT
EFFECT) | 6. Identify the EFFECT of this writing on the reader. What does the writer want his reader to feel, believe, or do? |
| (HOW) | 7. Identify the kind of ORGANIZATION. How did the writer try to accomplish all the steps above (1 through 6)? |

NOW, PUT THEM ALL TOGETHER!

Directions: Complete the statement of purpose (below) by filling in your answers to the questions above in the blanks as specified. (Watch the numbers!)

Statement of Purpose

_____	_____
1. (who?)	4. (under what circumstances?)
is trying to _____	
5. (why?)	3. (to whom?)
_____ by _____	so that
2. (what?)	7. (how?)

6. (for what effect?)	

WORKSHEET II FOR ANALYZING PURPOSE

Complete the questions provided by your teacher, and complete an analysis for the selection below.

"Greenville Toasts Its Own Phoebe Ann Mozee." Ohio Magazine, July 1984, p. 57.

Sitting Bull dubbed Annie Oakley "Little Miss Sure Shot," but long before she acquired either that sobriquet or her famous stage name, she was Phoebe Ann Mozee of Greenville, Ohio. As a child, she learned to shoot a muzzleloader in the Durke County fields. Hotels in Cincinnati and Dayton prized the Quaker girl's quail and rabbits--Phoebe Ann always hit her quarry in the head, so dining room customers never complained of finding shot in their dinners.

Her hometown will remember its clever little girl with Annie Oakley Days, July 28-29. Greenville's Gurst Museum harbors the world's largest Annie Oakley collection, and most festival events take place on the adjacent park grounds where local folk pitch a tent and stage an old-time melodrama that is pure Greenville written, directed and produced. The audience hurls its most vitriolic hisses and boos at The Villain, while The Hero enjoys their cheers. Last year, the hurrahs and hisses got so enthusiastic that the fellows over at the test-your-strength game complained they couldn't hear their bell ring.

Teenage girls from Darke County use BB guns to annihilate balloons in the Annie Oakley shoot-off. "Those kids are darn good shots, too," says Museum Director Toni Seiler. "We had to keep moving the starting line farther and farther away from the target last year. It was back a good hundred feet before we had a winner."

Greenville folks also make a pilgrimage out to Brock Cemetery where they place a star on Annie Oakley's grave.

"Annie always wore a six-pointed star on her hat for luck," explains Seiler. "Of course, ours has only five points and was last used for Eastern Star funerals, I think, but it's the spirit of the thing. Then, we fire a muzzleloader salute over her grave."

In between trips to the Elks' barbecued chicken stand and the Rotary's lemon shakes, visitors can view The Treaty of Green Ville painting in the Museum parlor.

"That peace treaty with the Indians made Ohio safe for settlement and is what should bring people into town, but it doesn't" says Mrs. Seiler. "You just cannot fight the charisma of Annie Oakley." For more information, call 513/548-5250. --D.V.

TEACHING PURPOSE

THE SELLING GAME

PURPOSE: To demonstrate the necessity of clarifying audience/purpose/writer for effective communication.

PREPARATION: Before the class period, the teacher should prepare on ditto the worksheets consisting of two lists of 10 items each: one list of items, products, or things, and the other of groups of people.

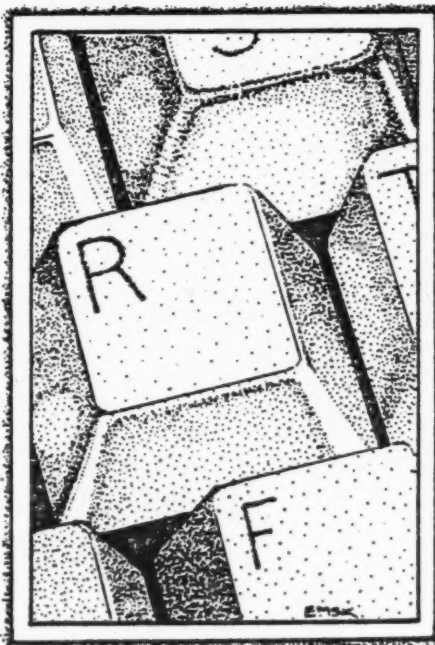
PRESENTATION: Arrange students in groups of about 4-5 members. Each group is to consider itself a "company" that is faced with having some excess items to sell. This company has been able to get hold of a mailing list of "prospective buyers."

Ask each group to pick two numbers from 1-10 (i.e., one number from each list) before they are given the lists. Cross off the numbers as they are used so no two groups have the same numbers. Then distribute to the students the lists you have prepared. Their assignment is to use the item they have picked to try to sell to the audience whose number they have picked at random. For example, one group might be trying to sell carrot curlers (#5) to the Young Liberals for Freedom (#6). Their task as a group is to decide what uses the item might have for their audience, how best to "persuade" the audience to buy. As a group they must compose a letter that will be sent to the audience via the mailing list they have been able to get. They may, if they wish, also prepare an ad, an appropriate slogan, a brochure of features, etc.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

Be sure to have a way for the groups to "show off" their efforts--posting them on a bulletin board, for example. You will be amazed at the creativity this exercise engenders!

SOURCE: Gratia Murphy, Youngstown State University



WORKSHEET

FOR

THE SELLING GAME

ITEMS

You are to sell these things:

1. purple and green striped denim bib overalls
2. NIKE running shoes, ankle high
3. peppermint patties
4. complete set of 20 records, History of Rock and Roll in America
5. carrot curlers
6. six foot wool mufflers
7. eye glass frames (no lenses)
8. 2" plastic statuettes of William Shakespeare
9. 2000 boxes (each containing 200 paper clips)
10. 600 used bricks (red, yellow, brown)

AUDIENCES

You are to convince these people to buy:

1. Speed Kings Motorcycle Group of Loma Linda, California
2. members of Parent Teachers Group of Pleasant Ridge, Wisconsin
3. English faculty of Wakhetenee High School, Wakhetenee, Idaho
4. parolees from the minimum security system of Ohio
5. members of Early Morning Bird Watchers of Greater Utah
6. Young Liberals for Freedom political group of Upstate New York
7. Chamber of Commerce of Riptide, Michigan
8. Petal Pushers Garden Club of Blossom City, Indiana
9. The Young Farmers of America organization from Pleasantville, Indiana
10. A group of militant feminists from San Francisco, called WWIN (We Want It Now!)

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Some helpful suggestions for identifying audience as a set of expectations and values, rather than a particular group or individual.

Jensen, Julie M. Composing and Comprehending. Urbana, Ill.: ERIC, 1984. (E, JH, SH)

Explores relationship between reading and writing as well as offering tips on giving creative writing assignments and instruction.

Kinneavy, James L. "The Basic Aims of Discourse." The Writing Teacher's Source Book. Eds. Gary Tate and Edward P.J. Corbett. New York: Oxford University

Press, 1981. 94-99. (E, JH, SH)

Knoblauch, C.H. "Intentionality in the Writing Process: A Case Study." College Composition and Communication 31 (1980): 153-59.

A case study of the conflicts the writer of a business proposal faces as he tried to reconcile a client's needs, legal restrictions, and his own ambitions. A good background for understanding that student writers probably have conflicting purposes which will complicate the choices they make.

---, and Lil Brannon. Rhetorical Traditions and the Teaching of Writing. Upper Montclair, N.J.: Boynton/Cook, 1984. (JH, SH)

Contains some practical suggestions on assisting students to discover purpose and direction in writing, based on an understanding of the actual process of composing. See esp. pp. 7-16.

Lindemann, Erika. A Rhetoric for Writing Teachers. New York: Oxford University Press, 1982. (E, JH, SH)

Contains some tips on evaluating audience needs and expectations (90-1) and some suggestions for making purposeful assignments which address a particular audience and have a definite "real world" purpose (203-09).

McCrimmon, James M. "Writing as a Way of Knowing." Rhetoric and Composition: A Sourcebook for Teachers and Writers. Ed. Richard L. Graves. Upper Montclair, N.J.: Boynton/Cook, 1984. 3-11. (E, JH, SH)

Discusses the use of audience feedback to help writers make decisions about content, focus, and purpose; includes three helpful prewriting activities. Very helpful suggestions for writers in a classroom or group situation.

Meagher, Judy. "The Making of a First-Grade Writer." Instructor 96.3 (1986): 36-40. (E)

Contains a description of one teacher's writing program evolved from a simple center to computer-generated stories.

Moffett, James. Teaching the Universe of Discourse. Boston:

Houghton Mifflin, 1983. (E, JH, SH)

Discussion (pp. 192-198) of the advantages of using peer groups as audience in the classroom with some suggestions for eliciting authentic feedback from these groups.

Murray, Donald M. A Writer Teaches Writing: A Practical Method of Teaching Composition. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1968. (SH)

Discussion of writing as discovery; includes discussion of expanding sense of audience by professional writers (pp. 2-5) and by students writers (p. 42).

Ong, Walter J., S.J. "The Writer's Audience Is Always a Fiction." PMLA 90 (1975): 9-21. (SH)

Writers must imagine or "create" the presumed audiences for their writing in order to use a voice or style to address this "imagined" audience.

Rhea, Philip L. "Writing for Natural Purposes." English Journal 75.2 (1986): 43-50. (JH, SH)

A record of a high school teacher's various writing assignments for a junior class: the article contains samples of students' writing plus students' opinions of the assignments.

Stewig, John Warren. Read to Write: Using Children's Literature As a Springboard for Teaching Writing. 2nd ed. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1980. (E, JH)

Section (pp. 61-99) contains interesting discussion of writing from another point of view or as another person. Excellent for writers, grades K-6.

Tarline, Gari. Grammar and Composition, Level I. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1985. (E, JH, SH)

Discusses awareness of audience and purpose as central to prewriting activities.

Warriner, John E. Warriner's English Grammar and Composition. New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1986. (E, JH, SH)

Provides exercises for deducing audience and purpose

from paragraphs and compositions.

Willey, R.J., Duane H. Roen, and Michael A. Rogers.
"Teaching Audience Awareness to Freshman Writers."
Teaching English in the Two-Year College 13.1 (1986):
7-11. (JH, SH)

Analyzes methods for teaching students to consider the
needs and concerns of their audience, including the
instructor-as-audience.

SCHOOL MAIL

DELIVER TO LAST PERSON NAMED

Department or Office

Name

Department or Office

THE
TRAIT
OF

Direction

Donna Blasiman
Sandra McNutt
Virginia Monseau
Dante Zambrini

THE TRAIT OF DIRECTION

The Trait of Direction: What Is It?

If a piece of writing is to succeed in doing what all purposeful communication is intended to do--convey a message to an audience for a particular purpose--then a sense of direction or structure must be a dominant feature of the discourse. Unless writers have a firm sense of how they want their pieces to move and unless they help readers move with them in that direction through skillful arrangement, readers are left confused, unsatisfied, unsure of the purpose intended or the message conveyed.

Direction or arrangement as a feature of writing cannot be absolutely isolated from other traits of writing described in this manual. Essential to direction, for example, is a firm sense of purpose because writers must first understand what audience they are writing to before they can choose the format or organizational strategy that best fulfills their need. Each instructor at each grade level must be aware of the instruction given at previous levels. In essence, this awareness will allow for the continuous writing strategy necessary for positive development in composition as students continue through the writing program. The quality and quantity of the ideas writers choose not only contribute to the movement of the piece, but also help readers understand the points that are being made.

The trait of direction is clear organization and easy-to-follow arrangement in the overall effectiveness of a piece of writing. One study has shown that organizational skill ranks high in assessment of written products. Teachers who have been asked to rank-order compositions usually are struck by good organization or faulty arrangement. Organization, then, would seem to be an important, if not crucial, element in what we define as "good writing" and what we consider important to teach in the classroom.

What Does Research Say About the Trait of Direction?

Teachers should be knowledgeable about the characteristics of children's writing at all ages and should also be skilled in the techniques of intervention. Elementary children come to school thinking of themselves as writers, and they really are prolific writers. For example, Lucy McCormick Calkins states in her book The Art of Teaching Writing that first graders may do a lot of drawing with their

writing, while second graders have surpassed the drawing stage and quite often write "bed to bed" stories, frequently using connectors such as "and then." By third grade, children are very concerned with correctness and will very frequently ask a teacher, "Is this right?" Students in grades four, five, and six begin to develop a sharper sense of direction, while junior high students show an even greater mastery of organizational skills. Showing more depth in thinking, high school students progress to a higher level of writing, and their directional structure is more complex.

The traditional approaches (i.e., using methods like comparison/contrast, analysis, or cause-effect; emphasizing spatial, chronological, or logical ordering; singling out the paragraph as a discrete unit of writing; "fixed forms" like the five-paragraph essay or the "funnel approach") are now given less emphasis or importance and quite frequently are dismissed because they are viewed as mechanical and artificial. More emphasis is now given to the ways writers find their means of direction, given the rhetorical strategies of writer, audience, and purpose they must juggle. In fact, as Connors points out in his essay on the "Rise and Fall of the Modes of Discourse," as composition instruction increasingly focuses on the rhetorical concerns of writers, less and less attention will be paid to the traditional formats of writing. Such writing (that is, writing which successfully meets the demands of its purpose and audience) has a sense of "open form"; that is, the writer finds the strategy and pattern that complements or develops naturally from the purpose, aim, and audience of the writing itself. It is ironic, however, that so many textbooks lag behind the findings of rhetoricians; witness the many books which are still arranged in the "traditional mode" format. Teachers really committed to a process approach may have to compensate for a book's arrangement or outright ignore it.

Teachers overlook the fact that students may already have an inherent--and often effective--insight into direction, and quite often their own natural sense of how they should arrange their material is inhibited by the enforcement in the classroom of rigid writing patterns. For example, what will the student do who is forced to write a three-point essay when he or she only has two important things to say? Teachers must show students specific techniques which permit them to view arrangement as inherent in the subject. This is not to say, of course, that teachers should not give students help in finding direction in their writing.

Research also stresses the need for students to

participate in numbers of prewriting experiences in the classroom, for it is during prewriting that direction is often found. Such situations should be designed to involve the students in thinking processes which allow them to discuss, organize tentatively, and revise during the writing process. At such times, students may relate organization to what they are attempting to write about. If, during the revising process, the respondents (either other students, the teacher, or the writers themselves) do not find the direction clear, they must alter it. Such revision may mean drastic rearrangement: moving around sentences or paragraphs (using a cut-and-paste method), eliminating or expanding certain sections, or reversing order or even introductions or conclusions. Transitions may then be sharpened or even added to enhance the direction of the paper.

An interesting 'sidelight to the necessity of having students rearrange parts of a composition to find better ordering is the increasing application of word processing for writers. One of the most useful advantages of processors is their ability to allow writers to delete, move, and add material to a text and then produce a "rearranged," readable text. Basic writers especially do not want to "destroy" what they put down on paper or mark up drafts with additions or deletions. Word processors allow students to manipulate their texts, a must for finding good direction and arrangement.

New methods of teaching direction involve a movement from speech to writing. Some sample activities include increased reading assignments (where successful direction is modeled), chain paragraphs, using professional writings as models for analysis (and students will find that rarely are successful forms "fixed"), peer evaluation, writing workshop sessions, and journal writing. Research indicates that students working together in groups can help each other find good arrangement strategies or improve and revise the ones they have.

The problem is that students often look to the teacher for a clear-cut, sure way of mastering the art of direction; however, there exists no prescribed method of attaining this trait that applies to all writing or even to writing of a particular type. The most successful arrangement of writing is that arrangement which best fits the purpose and the audience of the piece. Teachers can and should guide writers in the intricate, complex process of finding appropriate organizational schemes for their writing. That will come through practice and through informed response, response which will help writers form a sense of what makes logical

direction in writing.

How Does the Trait of Direction Develop in Student Writing?

To fully understand how the trait of direction develops in students' writing it is necessary to look at some examples. Elementary students demonstrate the trait of direction by using the simpler transitional devices, such as "before," "after," "then," "next," "now," "first," and "finally." Students at the fourth-grade level may exhibit effective grouping of ideas. For example, Tony, a talented fourth-grade student, writes about his backyard as his favorite place to go when he wants to be alone. After introducing his readers to his favorite place, Tony moves into his second paragraph by stating:

One time my friend and me put the swings way up and one of us would throw the ball to the one on the swing and the one on the swing would kick it. It was fun.

Tony begins his third paragraph with an effective transition, as he writes:

Another time I saw a balloon up in a tree and decided to climb the tree and get it down. So I climbed the tree and the balloon flew down to a smaller tree that was too small to climb. So I started to shake the tree but it wouldn't come down.

As Tony progresses through his essay he continues to use transitions, demonstrating continuity or a feeling of a beginning, middle, and end. In his final paragraph Tony relates:

Still another time I was playing hide-and-seek with David and Jason hid up in a tree. Jason couldn't find me and went in the front. I started to get down and he came back and saw me!

Now do you know why my backyard is one of my "special places?" (I hope so!)

Not all students have mastered a fluid pattern of organization, however. John*, another fourth grader, shows evidence of an unclear sense of development. John's essay contains a predictable opening. He writes:

I like to go in my room. I like my room. I have to share with my brother. I like to go to my room for anything. I do hobbies, listen to music, read, do my homework and just to relax. I do models up in my room and watch TV in my room.

John tells the reader that he likes to go to his room and then abruptly relates what he does there. His concluding paragraph merely repeats what he said in his introductory paragraph; he does not successfully develop any of his ideas, but merely lists one idea after the other. John ends his essay with:

My room is the place to go when I just want to go and think about what I want to draw and think about what there is to do. I like to look out the window and look at the birds and trees and all the things God made and the fresh air and all the animals the flowers and many other things. My bedroom is the place I want to go when I sleep. My bedroom is where I like to be.

Some fourth-grade writers exhibit no sense at all of transition among ideas and no organized pattern of development. Ralph's* paper is an example of these problems:

I like to go to Paradise Lake. Paradise Lake is is a nice campground to go to.

It has playgrounds, a swimming pool, a store that has food and candy, and a Diary queen, and bingo, and a hayride.

I like to ride around Paradise Lake by myself on my tenspeed.

It also has a place where you can play games like pac-man, and donkey kong and lots of other games.

The one thing I don't like is sometimes people hassle you around.

*The paper written by this student and by any students whose names are asterisked in this chapter may be found in the Appendix, "Assessment: A Primer for Teachers" (see Section on Anchor Papers).

They have a lake to fish in. I like that the best almost.

One time they had a fishing derby to see who could catch the most fish.

Once they put new fish in the lake and you could't fish for a long time. They put three tagged fish in the lake to win money if you caught it.

I think Paradise is a nice place. If you went there you would like it to.

But you would like Cooks Forset [forest] to because it has more stuff then Paradise like you can ride horses, gocarts, go swimming, play games like pac-man and donkey kong, go hiking, go fishing, boating, and their's no trouble about bossing there, and a store, playgrounds, and lots, lots, lots more.

Practically every sentence in Ralph's essay is a paragraph in itself, with no development and no transitions between ideas. He begins by talking about why Paradise Lake is his favorite place and ends by saying that the reader might like Cook's Forest better. Ralph has no sense of direction in his writing; therefore, his essay is merely a listing of various thoughts.

As previously stated, junior high students demonstrate a more sophisticated level of writing skill than elementary students. They tend to include more details in their writing and to group their ideas effectively. A seventh-grade student, Ann, involves the reader in her introductory paragraph when she writes:

My favorite way to relax is to go to the creek by my grandmother's house. The creek is a very quiet place. The only noises are the noises of the wilderness. The sights are extraordinary at all times of the year. In the summer all the wild flowers take bloom, and the deep green trees shade the area. In the winter the creek freezes, and long, narrow icicles hang from the caves and rock ledges. Personally I think fall is the best time of year. All the trees are yellow, orange, red and green and the cool breeze never lets the water be still.

In addition to effectively using details, Ann uses sequential order as she points out to the reader in a logical way what she takes with her down to the creek, how she arrives there, and how she sets up her equipment to start fishing:

Whenever I go down to the creek I take my fishing gear, my lounge chair, a cooler with a lunch, and my radio. Getting the stuff down to the creek is no bowl of cherries. To get there I have to go down two very steep hills, cross a creek, and climb a very steep hill. Many times I slip, fall, and get very wet. When I finally get down to the creek I set up and start fishing.

Other students at this level have demonstrated various methods for developing the trait of direction. These methods can include questions, transitions, spatial organization, and dialogue.

Some junior high writers are less skilled at including details and effectively organizing their writing. Though they may show evidence of adequate organization, the reader feels something is missing in the paper's total development. Charlie* is a good example of a seventh-grade writer whose essay becomes a series of generalizations with few specifics. He writes:

My favorite place to escape is at my grandfather's house. He lives out in the country. The back yard is huge. It has a pond in the back. My favorite thing is the woods.

I also like to just stroll through the woods. I see lots of small animals. All the birds chirping makes me feel a lot better. When I am in the woods I love to think about the future.

My favorite is the cabin. It has bunkbeds so my friends and I can camp back there. We have a camp fire and tell ghost stories it is fun. I guess nature is the way for me to escape.

Charlie talks about many things in the essay: his grandfather's house, the backyard, the pond, the woods. But he gives no real details about any of these things, leaving

the reader to fill in the gaps.

At the other end of the spectrum are the writers who show no evidence of organization, no transition among ideas, and no sense of continuity. One writer, Mary*, shows an erratic occurrence of ideas as she indecisively jumps from one idea to another. Mary haphazardly leads the reader through the paper, as she writes:

Everytime I get home from school I have to do my homework. I watch or usually watch T.V. to relax. I have to do many chores to help my parents. Sometimes I wish to go to many places to get away from my homework and chores. Some places where I would like to be are Chicago, Indiana, and Florida. Also I would very much like to be in Italy. Chicago is where my cousins live. We would do many things, and go to many places to pass time. In Indiana is where my best friend lives. She was my friend when we were real little. Her name is Kim. She would show me her new house and she would probably take me to her aunts house to swim in their huge swimming pool. Florida is a good place to go. Its nice weather and to spend most of my time swimming and making new friends. My final place is Italy. I think I should bring my family this time so we all could learn the culture and the way it is down there. We would learn new things and maybe even buy a few things from Italy to show and tell our relatives and friends. I wish this could be true. I would help or save me from my homework and my chores.

Though Mary may understand what she is trying to say, she takes for granted that the reader can make sense of her ideas. She provides no introduction, her ideas are erratic and undeveloped, and her paper lacks continuity.

Just as some junior high students show more skill in the trait of direction than elementary students, some high school writers have matured to the point where their writing shows even more sophistication. For example, Josh, a proficient high school writer, focuses on a specific manageable thesis,

which guides the reader smoothly in a deliberate, controlled, and interesting pattern. His writing has a discernible beginning, middle, and end and contains details and examples which seem both authentic and appropriate. Further, Josh demonstrates an awareness of which of these details and examples to emphasize and how they are to be ordered, as the following paper shows:

One reason people collect things is to divert themselves and ease their troubles. Take for example my collection of baseball cards. I began when I was about eight years old. When I started I was a Little Leaguer who dreamed of someday being on a card myself. My interest was sparked by my brother Lloyd who, being five years my senior, had already formed an extensive collection when I started.

Lloyd and I had not gotten along very well up to this point. Being the youngest of four children I was quite a brat, and often told on Lloyd. I started several fights with him, and when he would finally give in and administer the beating I so richly deserved, I would cry to my mother, and Lloyd would be punished.

However, our joint hobby soon changed all of that. We finally had something in common, and unlike most other things collecting baseball cards was one area in which we were equals. This equality was shown when he asked if I would like to join my collection with his and become his partner. As my spirits rose so did the value of our collection, and soon we began finding out all we could about the hobby. We started buying cards through the mail and attending card auctions. To these auctions we always carried price lists, lists of cards we needed, and most importantly, money. By this time Lloyd had gotten a job at a lawn-mower repair shop and I was cutting grass to earn money. The need for more money caused us to cut people's lawns together, and the profits from our business went to buy baseball cards. The hobby of baseball cards helped my brother and I to grow

closer together, and I am forever indebted to it.

In this paper Josh makes effective and creative use of transitions, resulting in an essay with apparent, logical, and easy development. The essay's direction is of high quality because he has clearly focused on a point which controls the meaning of his paper and makes it easy for the reader to follow and understand. He uses the baseball card collection as a means of making a deeper statement about its importance by emphasizing the gradual shared interest and eventual closer personal relationship between the writer and his brother that evolves out of the collecting they do.

The organizational pattern is both chronological and thematic. The chronological pattern unfolds as Josh narrates the events over time, beginning with a description of himself as a tormenting "brat" who would instigate trouble with his older brother and ending with his and his brother's transformation into partners because of their mutual enthusiasm for baseball card collecting. He skillfully uses time signals ("soon" . . . "we started" . . . "by this time") to carry the reader along smoothly. His good use of tense markers on verbs to show the time span (see last sentence of the first paragraph) is indicative of the adeptness he shows in this area.

Not all high school students show Josh's sense of direction in their writing, however. Their papers may show an inappropriately focused thesis and details that are often mechanical and repetitious. The typical high school writer, such as Sandy, may show some sense of direction, but her paper seems imbalanced and contains flawed emphasis:

I really have a great love for cats, I guess you could say that's one reason why I collect them. Over the years I have collected maybe as many as a 100 or so figurines of different types of cats. There's really not one breed of cats that I like best, but if I did have to pick one it would be the long haired siemease. My collection ranges from playful little kittens to sophisticated cats. I would have to say out of all my figurines, my most favorite would have to be the playful siemease kittens. They look so beautiful with the cream and light brown colors and their sparkling blue eyes and

when I look at my collection, I wish deep down that I could own a cat of my own. Because to me they represent agility, grace, and beauty all in one, something I have never had. Maybe one day I'll own one my self. But, as long as I don't I guess I'll just keep on collecting.

Sandy's paper is of middle quality because the direction is not clear from the beginning. The first several sentences indicate that she has not yet decided exactly what the focus of the paper is to be: collecting real cats or collecting figurines of cats. There is veering back and forth in the first several sentences, leaving the reader unsure of exactly what the writer wants to say.

As the piece goes on, however, the paper's direction and meaning do begin to emerge, when Sandy gains control of the paper's direction. She reveals some attempt at integration and movement as a pattern of development (moving from the specific collection to the reason why it is important, from the details to the generalization), but more logical and more appropriate transitions might have been employed.

There is a third group of high-school writers who seem unaware of any organizational pattern at all. Even though their papers may have a thesis, they lack a sense of direction and control. Their papers either contain no details, or they use details carelessly in an unrelated fashion. There is little or no use of transitional devices, causing the reader to invent logical connections among the ideas. Chad's paper is a good example of this. His writing shows poor or low quality in the area of direction because he has started writing before he has a clear sense of what he wants to say or to whom he wants to say it:

Collection of local articles is spreading nation wide in the American and forighn countries. From beer cans to barbed wire. People can collect the most strangest things. Then again things may collect the most strangest people. For example alochol, drugs and sycic problems may collect on every man, woman, and child who is ignorant enought to give in, but man must learn to look on the positive side of life like love, hope, caring and sharing. Thear is so many things that man must collect, but cannot due to a mental or physical handicap or

block. This world would be a much better place to live in if man would think positive and collect the right things.

It is obvious that Chad is not in control of his writing; therefore, the reader is lost and confused. Each sentence apparently begins to make a new point: the "strange" things people collect, the "strange" people who do collecting, the "problems" that "collect on" people, the necessity for people to collect the "right things"--ideas that are never expanded upon or explained enough to make clear what Chad means. At the end of the essay, the reader is left wondering exactly what he was trying to say, since there is no attempt made to supply any connections. A clear signal of Chad's lack of ability to make connections is his use of the phrase, "Then again," which signals a new idea (totally unrelated to the one before it), and his use of "For example," when what follows is not an example of what had been said before.

As these examples show, students become more proficient in their use of higher level strategies as they advance in their writing development. However, knowing what direction means or even recognizing a smooth flow of ideas does not mean that they know how to achieve a sense of satisfactory arrangement. Writers may need at first the security of a suggested plan with which to organize ideas. For instance, appropriate instruction in the primary and lower elementary grades would include a very simple explanation of the task at hand. The students must understand what they are to do or write about and who will read their story. The instructor would also give clear and concise examples of the task and lead or "direct" the students through each step. In this manner, students could learn effective organization of their task. Activities dealing with chronological order, order of location, order of appearance, and cause and effect arrangement would be appropriate at this level. At the intermediate levels (grades 5 through 7 or 8), it will not be necessary to approach the students with tasks based on a step-by-step plan. Direction and organization can, at this stage, be presented as an all-encompassing strategy instructing students in effective organization of composition (introduction, development, closing) and effective use of ideas, transitions, etc. But care should be taken so that writers do not see a preconceived plan as the only way they can organize materials. Part of the misunderstanding occurs because students have a skewed picture of what ordering is. Many see organizational patterns as "frames" into which ideas should be fitted, not organizational strategies that grow out of the writing process itself, its purpose and audience.

Because experienced writers appreciate the fact that arrangement evolves from the writing itself, the settling in on an appropriate plan for writing may be something that occurs at various stages of the writing process, especially at the high school level. For example, writers may find the most appropriate direction for them to use emerging in the prewriting stage, as they collect, sort, and categorize ideas to write about and as they clarify their purpose and audience. Sometimes, however, writers "find" their direction as they begin to write a rough draft, when the writing out of ideas allows writers to "discover" the shape or organizational plan that best fits their subject and purpose. In the revising stage, too, writers often reorganize the relationships between parts and whole of the essay, adding material where needed to help the reader move from point to point, deleting unnecessary "off the point" ideas, sharpening and refining the transitional signals or cohesive strategies that help lead and direct the reader along the path of the discourse.

Teachers should continue to help students experiment with direction and structure, encouraging them to let their arrangement evolve out of the ideas and purpose of the task. Teachers should continue to encourage all students to achieve clear, original, and viable direction in their work. When students write--and know they have succeeded--they don't at all mind writing again.

TEACHING DIRECTION

THE PHOTO FILE

PURPOSE: To present activity cards with the purpose of putting them in order.

PREPARATION: (Lots! But worth it!) Camera and time. Over the summer is great!

PRESENTATION: Film (by snapshots) the construction or growth of something in sequence.

- Examples:
1. A flower from seed to plant.
 2. A house under construction.
 3. Cookies being baked.
 4. The seasons changing.
 5. A car wash.

ADDITIONAL

COMMENTS: Takes time but is a nice permanent collection that can be added to all year. Fun to do using students in the photos.

SOURCE: Arlene Scull, John White Elementary School



TEACHING DIRECTION

HOW-TO-DO

PURPOSE: To give directions using transitional words.

PREPARATION: Provide a supply of index cards on a table or area where child may work.

PRESENTATION: Have students write directions in "step form" on some type of activity, (making Kool-Aid or sandwiches, blowing up a balloon, folding a paper airplane, etc.). Then have students give directions orally as they demonstrate the activity, while the rest of the class write down the major steps of each set of directions as they listen. Assign one child to duplicate each process described and report back to the speaker on the success of the "instructions."

SOURCE: Arlene Scull, John White Elementary School



ELEMENTARY ♦

TEACHING DIRECTION

COMIC STRIP CUT-UP

PURPOSE: To provide practice in organizing details in a narrative.

PREPARATION: Collect four-frame comic strips from the local newspaper, enough so that each student in your class can have one. Also needed: one small envelope per child.

PRESENTATION: Give each child a comic strip. Instruct students to read their comic strips and then compose a written version of what happens in their strips. Tell each child to cut apart the frames of the strip and place the four pieces in an envelope you provide. Clip written narratives to the corresponding envelopes. Have students exchange packets, read one another's narratives, and attempt to arrange the frames of the comic strip in proper order according to the sequence given in the narrative.

**ADDITIONAL
COMMENTS:**

Variation for older children: Before cutting strips apart, have students cut out or blacken out the "speech balloons" from the frames. This makes the reader much more dependent on the student's written version of the comic strip in order to assemble it in its proper order.

SOURCE: Gary Salvner, Youngstown State University



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TEACHING DIRECTION

WHAT NEXT?

PURPOSE: To teach sequence in written directions.

PREPARATION: On the previous day, organize students into small groups, and have each group compose a brief set of instructions on how to do something familiar to the whole class (brush teeth, comb hair, plant flowers, put on jacket, feed a pet, etc.).

PRESENTATION: Put students into the same groups they were in yesterday, and have each group review and (if necessary) revise their set of instructions. Then have the group copy each sentence of their instructions onto a separate note card and shuffle the cards. Instruct groups to exchange sets of note cards and attempt to arrange the sentence cards in their proper order and then to compare their sets of instructions with the originals.

After the activity, discuss those words and phrases ("first," "second," "next," "after," etc.) that help to mark order and sequence in written English.

SOURCE: The Direction Group



TEACHING DIRECTION

WHODUNIT!

PURPOSE: To compose a credible sequence of events that lead up to a given mystery story ending.

PREPARATION: Acquaint students with the form and organization of mystery stories by reading several to them: Encyclopedia Brown, Cam Jansen, etc.

PRESENTATION: Divide the class into five groups, and give each group the ending sentence to a mystery story. (See worksheet for ending sentences.) Then have groups collaborate on mystery stories that logically lead up to the given ending sentences.

Have groups read stories aloud to the class.

SOURCE: Adapted from an idea by Donna Jean Blasiman, West Branch--Goshen Center School



ELEMENTARY ♦

WORKSHEET

FOR

WHODUNIT!

Mystery Story Endings

1. Looking up from the box in his hands, Professor Green exclaimed, "So it was you, my trusted assistant, who stole my jewels!"
2. Thinking over the events of the last two days, Bill realized for the first time that it had to be the butler who committed the murder. He was the only one who could have gotten into the old man's house that night.
3. Susan looked again at the painting on the wall. Noticing for the first time the small figure in the red hat on the right edge of the picture, she exclaimed, "So it was Jonah who stole the paintings from Pierre's art studio!"
4. After gathering them all together in the dining room, Inspector Homes picked up a fork with the large dining table and said, "This was the murder weapon, and it was you, Ruth, who killed Madam Foster."
5. Sergeant Wednesday stood on the shore of the lake and wondered why Senator Glop had thought he could get away with the crime by hiding the documents at the bottom of Lake Erie.

TEACHING DIRECTION

FROM START TO FINISH

- PURPOSE:** To gain knowledge of and practice in writing "middle" portions of compositions and to become familiar with opening and closing sentences.
- PREPARATION:** Have copies of the various opening and closing sentences of five different stories. (See worksheet.) Choose one set, and supply the missing middle.
- PRESENTATION:** Have each student choose one set of the opening and closing sentences and supply the missing middle to the tale.
- ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:** Other opening and closing sentences may be used according to the level of students' performance.
- SOURCE:** Michael J. Katula, Lowellville Local School. Adapted from "Tab Superskills--Composition Topics #14." Scholastic Magazine, 1978, 164.

MIDDLE SCHOOL



WORKSHEET
FOR
FROM START TO FINISH

Examples of Opening and Closing Sentences:

1. (start) Captain Bill Roberts was only in the air a few minutes when he knew this wasn't going to be just another routine passenger flight.

 (end) As he brought the plane down and taxied to the terminal, Captain Roberts could only laugh and shake his head, unable to believe what had just happened.
2. (start) Jim, Cindy, and Holly were in the lunch room when it arrived.

 (end) By the time they had all looked it over and tried it, the three fourth graders decided that it helped make this the most unusual lunch they had ever had.
3. (start) Tyrone and Vanessa lived next door to each other and often walked together to school.

 (end) By the time they reached school, they were both soaking wet.

TEACHING DIRECTION

CRAZY CONNECTORS

PURPOSE: To emphasize how transitional words and phrases connect ideas, sentences, and paragraphs; how the use of good transition in writing affects organization and direction.

PREPARATION: 1. Provide a lengthy list of transitional words and phrases.

2. Provide a long list of titles (books, movie/TV shows, magazines) appropriate to the grade level. (Alternative list or lists of titles, sayings, topics, or topic phrases, etc. can be applied to the ideas above.)

PRESENTATION: Students look at the transitional words and/or phrases (individually or in pairs or groups). They use them to link the titles below them (or their own titles, sayings, etc.) in crazy but structurally sound sentences. Use at least one transitional word or phrase in each sentence, and add other words where they are needed.

Samples: I Always Wanted to Be Somebody; therefore, I Walked with Heroes.

A Year is Forever; consequently, it's Gone with the Wind.

It's in Mamma's Bank Account; therefore, You Can't Take It with You.

SOURCE: Fred Krolopp, South Range Intermediate School. Adapted from "Writing Transitions" in Shifting Gears (Scholastic Magazine, 1978).



TEACHING DIRECTION

SUPER CHEF

PURPOSE: To write a paragraph explaining how to cook a simple food.

PREPARATION: Use a pre-writing situation. Ask the students if they know how to cook or prepare a simple food. Emphasize the importance of following the directions.

PRESENTATION: Have students think of a simple food that they know how to cook or prepare. They might choose a salad, a sandwich, a fried egg, lemonade, popsicles, popcorn, or some other dish. Have them explain in a brief paragraph how to cook or prepare the dish that they have chosen. Put together into a class cookbook.

SOURCE: Joan Bolkovac, Springfield Intermediate School. Adapted from Resources Book for Grammar and Composition, First Course (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1984).



TEACHING DIRECTION

ARCHIE OLOGIST

PURPOSE: To develop a paragraph in an organized way through the use of supporting statements, transitional words, and details.

PREPARATION: The teacher should bring three interesting objects to class for students to describe.

PRESENTATION: Your name is Archie Ologist. The year is 2898.
The place is _____ your town _____.

Pretend you're an archeologist studying the 20th century and you have just dug up the three objects the teacher is holding. Write a short creative paragraph that describes one of the objects. Here is some more help: Your topic sentence should tell what the object was used for in 1987. Include details in your supporting sentences that tell whether there is anything about the object that made it especially good for that use. You may also include something about the inventor of the object. Sample paragraphs written by students (see worksheet) can be used as examples for studying organization or direction in writing.

ADDITIONAL

COMMENTS: The first paragraph is a good example of varying sentence beginnings while the second is a good example of using transitional words.

SOURCE: Sandra McNutt, West Branch High School



WORKSHEET

FOR

ARCHIE OLOGIST

Describing an Egg Beater

This strange and unique contraption was probably used as an aid for the relief of body aches in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Fabricated in the Age of Amusement, the rotary massager was used mainly by the race known as the Middle-Class American. With just a turn of the green crank, the user was immediately whisked into a state of supreme bliss. An examination of the rotating blades reveals that the device was invented in a small town called Stainless Steel, U.S.A., by Betty Crocker, a famous chiropractor. While this may have been an instrument of real genius, it seems that with a little imagination this apparatus could also be used for the simple task of beating eggs.

Describing Ice Tongs

One of the greatest inventions for sports, the basketball striper, was invented in the early 1900's to make the black line which went around the basketball. First, the black line gave the ball sure gripping ability. Secondly, it made the ball pretty and nice to look at. Coming way before his time, the inventor, Dr. J., was a master at the game of basketball. He knew the game inside and out; furthermore, he could play the game like no one else. In conclusion, the basketball striper was the greatest thing in early sports since the cork ball whistle.

TEACHING DIRECTION

LINING UP FOR THE FUTURE

PURPOSE: To write an autobiography using a time line to initiate time order sequence.

PREPARATION: Have student draw a time line, using a ruler. Students will mark in important dates in their lives (births, vacations, accomplishments, etc.).

PRESENTATION: Using the time line, students write 2-3 paragraphs about themselves.

Self-portraits of particular events could be added afterward as an art project.

ADDITIONAL

COMMENTS: Students might extend the time line into the future and mark in anticipated milestones, writing about events, goals, expectations, etc.

SOURCE: Arlene Scull, John White Elementary School



TEACHING DIRECTION

QUESTIONING FOR ORDER

PURPOSE: To remind students of the importance of revision for order, a "re-seeing" of a paper's organization and movement.

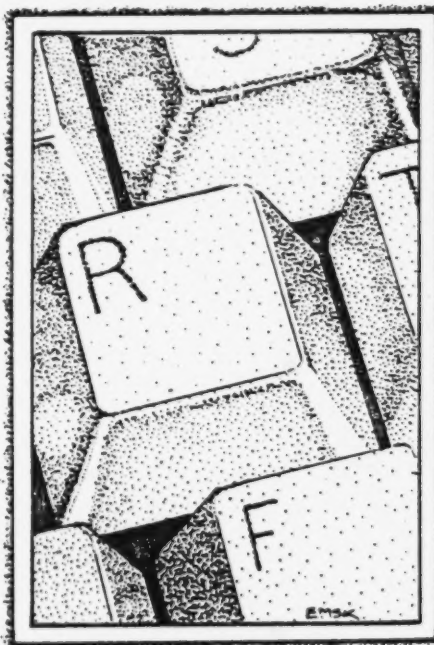
PREPARATION: Either duplicate the "revision guide" on the worksheet or put the questions on the board.

PRESENTATION: Get the students into revision groups of three each. Have students trade papers and fill out answers. Sheets are then returned to the writer.

ADDITIONAL

COMMENTS: This revision guide is narrower in focus than some because the questions all have to do with the organization of the paper.

SOURCE: The Direction Group



WORKSHEET
FOR
QUESTIONING FOR ORDER

1. Read the essay. Then answer--
 - a. What is the purpose of this essay?
 - b. Who is the audience for this essay?
2. Is there a beginning or introduction? a conclusion?
3. Read the body of the essay paragraph by paragraph. Write a one-sentence summary of each paragraph.
4.
 - a. Does the ordering seem right for the topic? Why or why not?
 - b. What other order can you suggest that might be better?
 - c. Are there any paragraphs or materials that should be added or deleted? Where?
5. Put circles around transitional words used to connect the paragraphs.
Can you suggest any to help tie the paragraphs together? Is so, what would you use and where?
6. Read each body paragraph separately, looking at how each paragraph is arranged and what transitional words or devices link the sentences. Make any suggestions.
7. Are there any suggestions you can give the writer to help make this paper easier to follow?

NAME _____

RETURN TO WRITER

TEACHING DIRECTION

THE STAR REPORTER

PURPOSE: To use news writing or feature story writing as tools for teaching organization.

PREPARATION: The teacher pretends that he or she is a news source. The teacher may even dress up to fit the occasion. The teacher may use the ideas below or think of an original idea.

PRESENTATION: Example for a news story:

The teacher poses as a chemistry instructor who was a witness to a fire when it broke out in the class she was teaching that morning. If the teacher desires to be creative, he or she could be wearing a lab coat, have goggles hanging around his/her neck, and have chemistry equipment in the room.

Example for a feature story:

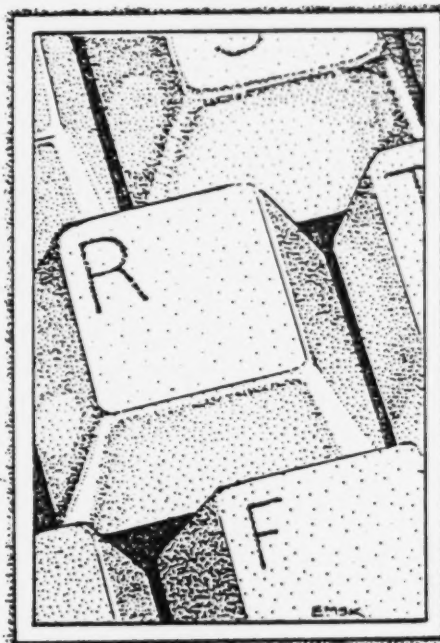
The teacher poses as the first female coach for the local high school's all-boys' basketball team. She should be wearing a coach's shirt, have a whistle around her neck, and carry a basketball into the room. Students then hold a "press conference" in which they interview the teacher and take detailed notes. Students must organize their notes and choose the "five w's and the h" "who-what-when-where" for the lead and "why" and "how" for the explanation in the remainder of the article.

The instructor may focus students' attention on organization by teaching the use of leads and the inverted pyramid form in news stories or the use of climax statements at the end of feature stories. Examples of news stories and feature stories from the newspaper should be brought in and examined as models.

ADDITIONAL

COMMENTS: Compile students' news and feature stories into a class newspaper, using pictures, captions, banners, etc.

SOURCE: Sandy McNutt, West Branch High School



TEACHING DIRECTION

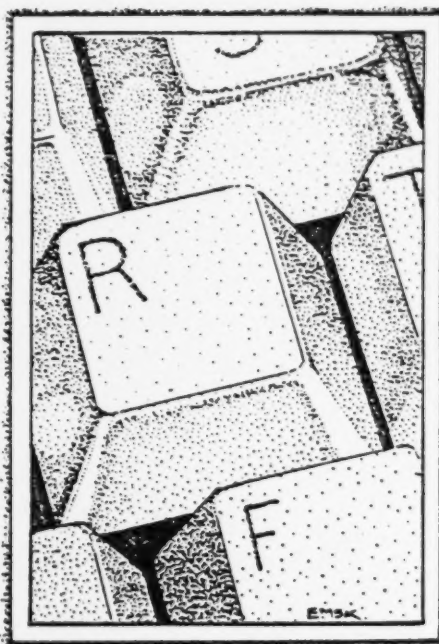
THE COMPOSITE ESSAY

PURPOSE: To help students understand the composing process through a cooperative writing project. As they work together to produce a unified essay, students improve their individual writing skills.

PREPARATION: Students begin the assignment by reviewing together the characteristics of good writing. Then explain that the class will be working in small groups during the next two or three days to prepare an essay on a topic of their choice. Cluster three or four students in groups and tell each group to pick a topic to analyze. (See worksheet.)

PRESENTATION: Each group drafts a thesis statement for its topic and plans the subdivisions of the essay in sequential order. Each group member takes on the responsibility of developing a paragraph for one of the subtopics before the next day. During that class period, students return to their groups to read the paragraphs aloud and to talk about how the writing could be changed and improved. They see ways paragraphs do or don't fit together as they discuss development, unity, transition devices, point of view, and tone. Students rework their paragraphs accordingly; then the group writes an introduction and a conclusion for the composite essay. One member volunteers to write or type a final copy.

SOURCE: "Essay Teamwork" from NCTE Notes Plus, adapted by Paula Putarek, Springfield Local High School



WORKSHEET

FOR

THE COMPOSITE ESSAY

Suggested topics for composite essays

1. If I were principal (head) of my high school (household), I would try hard to accomplish (change) three things . . .
2. If the faculty asked my advice about improving student attitudes toward homework, I would suggest that they . . .
3. Really successful athletes (musicians) possess three key traits . . .
4. Working students (honor students, band members, athletes) face unique problems . . .
5. Aspects of the American way of life that I like most are . . .
6. The most powerful status symbols at my school are . . .
7. Much television advertising today preys on certain kinds of fears . . .

TEACHING DIRECTION

"SUPER STUDENT"

PURPOSE: To gather ideas, sequence and arrange ideas, and to write and illustrate paragraphs describing "Super Students" of

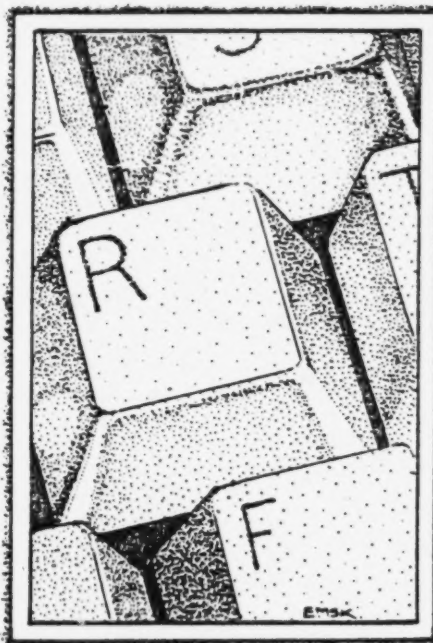
High School.

PREPARATION: Reproduce the list of transitional and linking expressions on the next page.

- PRESENTATION:**
1. Divide class into two large groups: One group will work on describing "Ms. Super Student"; the other, "Mr. Super Student."
 2. Divide each group into two subgroups. Each subgroup should choose two recorders.
 - a. Subgroup A brainstorms a list of details describing what "Ms. Super Student" or "Mr. Super Student" looks like.
 - b. Subgroup B brainstorms a list of details describing the actions, deeds, activities, skills, etc. the Super Student has or does.
 3. After a short time, Subgroups A and B exchange lists. Each group adds to list of either physical characteristics or activities.
 4. Return brainstorming lists to group which started them. Subgroups then review lists, decide what material to include, which to omit, sequence the information, and write a paragraph. (Here is where groups will review and use appropriate linking expressions). Recorder will prepare a rough draft.
 5. Subgroups then exchange paragraphs, which are read orally and commented on for revision.
 6. Drafts are returned to writers, and revisions are made. Each group prepares an edited copy of the paragraphs.
 7. The four paragraphs (2 on Ms. Super Student's, 2 on Mr. Super Student's descriptions and activities) are then illustrated by the group appropriately with a drawing that shows what he/she looks like and what he/she does. These, of course, may be very creative!

(This activity will take more than one class period.)

SOURCE: Helen Frangos, Campbell Memorial High School



WORKSHEET

FOR

"SUPER STUDENT"

Chronological Order

after
afterward
as soon as
as
at first
at the same time
since then
soon
when

before
during
earlier
finally
first
in the beginning
then
subsequently
while

in the end
in the meantime
later
meanwhile
next
now
simultaneously
until

Description

in front of
in the middle of
in the distance
on my left (right)
to the side of
to the left (right)
facing
into
overhead
toward
upon

above
across
across from
against
along
also
further
next
opposite
under
within

among
around
at
before me
behind
below
here
on
outside
underneath
without

beneath
beyond
beside
between
by
down
inside
over
throughout
up

Order of Importance

at the same time
best of all
first...second...
for example
for instance
in the first place
in addition
least important
more important
most important
of greater importance
of major concern
to begin with
worst of all

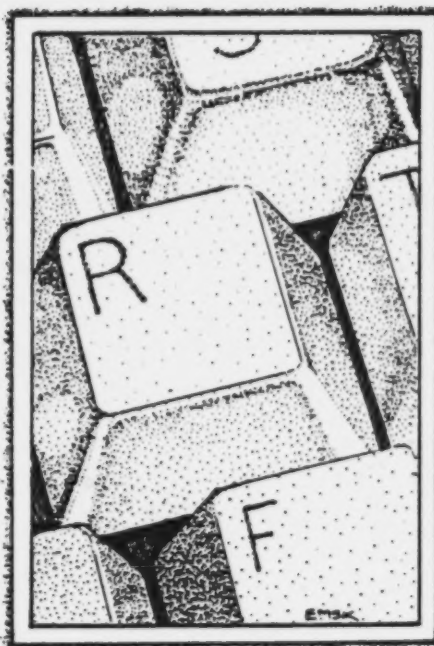
above all
also
another
besides
finally
furthermore
likewise
moreover
of less importance
of minor importance
similarly
such

TEACHING DIRECTION

CLASS WRITING WITH A PURPOSE

PURPOSE: Given a topic sentence, students will develop a paragraph in an organized way through the use of supporting statements and details. Then paragraphs can be combined to form a longer essay as a whole class activity.

PREPARATION: Reproduce the "Do's" handout.



- PRESENTATION:**
1. Distribute the list of "Do's" on the handout. Have students generate additional "Do" sentences. Have them also generate details/explanations/examples for statements.
 2. Teacher then asks students for sample topic sentences for a paragraph on "Handling the Job Interview Well" that would or could include several of the statements. Put topic sentences on the board. For example, one topic sentence might be "A person should go to an interview well prepared" or "A job interviewee has to look and act the part." Generate as many topic sentences as possible.
 3. Students are assigned a topic sentence and (working in small groups) they choose statements and details from the "Do's" and brainstorming lists that could be used in their paragraph. Details should be arranged logically and supported with examples, illustrations, etc.
 4. The paragraphs generated by each group should be duplicated for the class.
 5. The class can, working together, use the paragraphs to compose a whole "class theme" on "Interviewing Well." The class can decide on the ordering of the paragraphs, supply transitions between paragraphs, and write an effective opening and closing for the essay.

SOURCE: Helen Frangos, Campbell Memorial High School

"DO'S" HANDOUT FOR CLASS WRITING WITH A PURPOSE

1. Dress appropriately for the position you are being interviewed for.
2. Introduce yourself to the interviewer.
3. Show knowledge of good manners (say "No, thank you" when offered a cup of coffee; thank interviewer for the interview; etc.).
4. Speak correct English.
5. Show enthusiasm and interest in working at the particular job.
6. Show interest in the position by asking what duties are involved.
7. Be prepared with answers to pertinent questions.
8. Show interest in seeing the physical environment in which you will work.
9. Show interest in benefits.
10. Show knowledge about the company.
11. Know the name of the interviewer, and use it often during the interview.
- 12.
- 13.

Brainstorming Details/Examples

1. Avoid jeans and T-Shirts/shine shoes/no noisy jewelry/IBM look, etc.
 2. Firm handshake/speak clearly/smile, etc.
- etc.

TEACHING DIRECTION

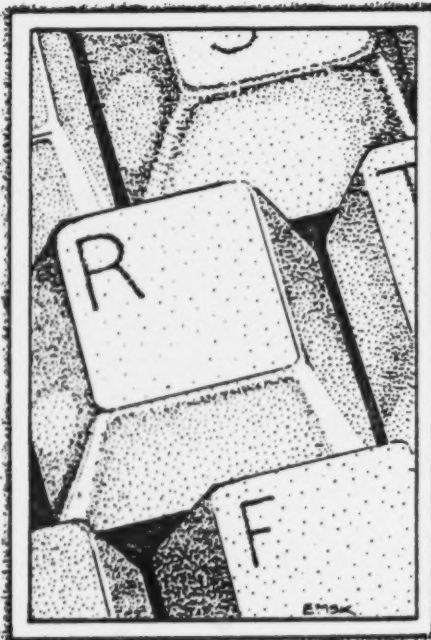
WHAT'S IT ABOUT?

PURPOSE: To identify a topic sentence.

PREPARATION: Students write a paragraph and put the topic sentence at the end, separated from the paragraph.

PRESENTATION: Either the student reads her paragraph aloud or the teacher does. The topic sentence is omitted, though, and other students in the class attempt to construct (or reconstruct) the topic sentence. Choices of a variety of topic sentences might then be discussed by the class. Which topic sentences fit best? Where do they fit best? (Beginning or end?)

SOURCE: Karen Taylor, West Branch High School

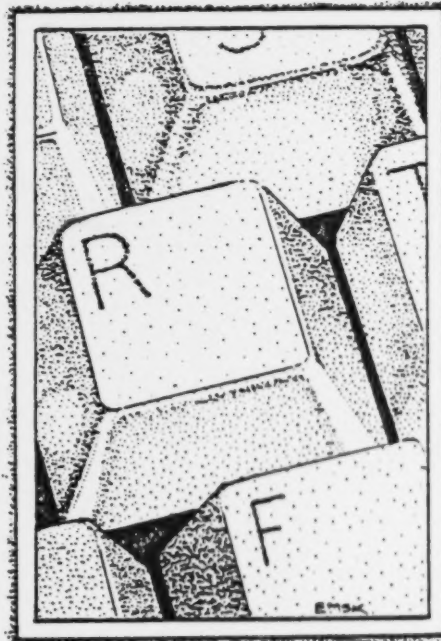


TEACHING DIRECTION

PUTTING IT TOGETHER

PURPOSE: To construct an integrated paragraph.

PREPARATION: Students should bring in two copies of a paragraph they have written. One copy is the original; the other should be a series of sentences copied on separate lines of a sheet of paper. The second copy is cut apart, and put in an envelope.



PRESENTATION: Students should exchange sets of sentences. The group of sentences should be arranged in logical order. Students should get together--the original writer and the "arranger"--to compare the versions. Good paragraphs to use are narrative, logical order, analysis, etc.

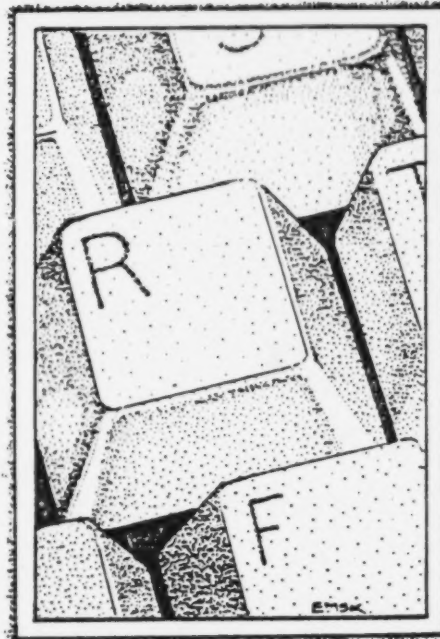
SOURCE: This activity and variations of it can be found in a number of places; adapted from The English Teacher's Activities Handbook. Floyd L. Bergman, (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1976), 25. (Close variations can be found in Senior English Review Exercises and Sentence Power.)

TEACHING DIRECTION

MAPPING WORDS

PURPOSE: To locate direction words in articles for use in the student's own writing.

PREPARATION: Students are told to bring magazines to class. The teacher should have "extras" in the room in case some students forget a copy.



PRESENTATION: Students look for transitional words that help to build coherence in articles. 1) Students should make a list of transitional words and orally give their lists to the class. They should add other students' words to their lists also. (Now students have a list they can use for reference for other writing assignments.) 2) An extension of this activity would be to ask students to write a paragraph overusing transitional words for comic effect. 3) Another variation might be to have them copy paragraphs omitting transitional words and exchange paragraphs with another student, who will attempt to supply appropriate transitional words.

SOURCE: The Direction Group. The idea of bringing magazines to class to search for transitional words in articles was suggested in Better Paragraphs.

Bibliography

Applebee, Arthur N. The Child's Concept of Story. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978.

Explores the storytelling patterns of children from early childhood to adolescence, examining the linguistic and psychological factors that influence their responses to stories.

Berthoff, Ann E. The Making of Meaning: Metaphors, Models, and Maxims for Writing Teachers. Montclair, N.J.: Boynton-Cook, 1981.

Combines both the author's "maxims" about the act of language being a way to achieve meaning (a way of coming to "know") and in Part II, reprints of sections, or in some cases whole articles which have appealed to her. See in particular Part II, chp. 2, "Composing is Forming," and especially pp. 68-72, "Learning the Uses of Chaos."

Boiarsky, Carolyn. "Cut-and-Paste and Other Revision Activities." English Journal 69.8 (1980): 44-47.

Suggests that revision includes at least eleven special activities, many related to reorganization strategies. Several practical approaches (cutting and pasting, outlining a draft, expansion and deletion techniques, etc.) are listed.

Braddock, Richard. "The Frequency and Placement of Topic Sentences in Expository Prose." Research in the Teaching of English 8 (1974): 287-304.

The study that did much to dispel the myth that "good" writing follows the frequently taught dictum of a "clearly stated topic sentence" appearing either at the beginning or at least someplace in a paragraph.

Calkins, Lucy McCormick. The Art of Teaching Writing. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann, 1986.

An invaluable guide for teachers of grades K-8 who are new to the idea of the writing process. Explains how children change as writers.

Connors, Robert J. "The Rise and Fall of the Modes of Discourse." College Composition and Communication 32

(1981): 444-55.

Reviews the history of composition teaching in America, demonstrating how the "modes" achieved the prominence they had and how and why emphasis on their importance as framing devices for courses in composition has died in the last forty years.

Emig, Janet. The Composing Process of Twelfth Graders. Urbana, Ill.: NCTE, 1971.

An important report on how writing is taught in school and how that way varies from how experienced and professional writers write. In particular, the chapter on "Implications" (95-100) makes some damning comments on how composition teaching is performed: "Much of the teaching of composition in American high schools is essentially a neurotic activity."

Flower, Linda. Problem-Solving Strategies for Writing. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1981.

Centers on the writing process as a problem-forming and solving process. See especially chapter 7, "Organizing Ideas," and in particular, the "Issue Tree."

Frank, Marjorie. If You're Trying to Teach Kids How To Write, You've Gotta Have This Book! Nashville, Tenn.: Incentive Publications, 1979.

A must for the classroom teacher wishing to use the writing process with her students. Gives tips for handling the whole writing process. Presents enough ideas and sources for motivating writing experiences throughout the school year.

Freedman, Sarah Warshauer. "Some Reasons for the Grades We Give Compositions." English Journal 71.7 (1982): 86-89.

Makes the point that teachers rate organizational skill high when rank-ordering compositions, while "mechanics and sentence structure [are valued] once the higher levels of the discourse are under control" (88).

Graves, Donald H. Writing: Teachers and Children at Work. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann, 1985.

A practical book for teachers of grades K-6 who are new to the idea of the writing process. The book can help.

teachers who want something to guide them when they are turning their classrooms into writing workshops.

Hartwell, Patrick. "Teaching Arrangement: A Pedagogy." College English 40 (1979): 548-554.

Makes the point that how we as teachers teach the art of arrangement, is both "boring" and ill-advised. Offers (550ff.) some ways of connecting theory to practical classroom situations.

Hartwell, Patrick, with Robert Bentley. Open to Language. New York: Oxford University Press, 1982.

A readable rhetoric containing (in addition to wise advice about writing) activities for implementing the author's discussions. In particular, chapter 5, "The Discursive Paragraph," and chapter 13, "The Formative Principle," relate to the problems of teaching arrangement, order, and sequence.

Kinneavy, James L. "The Basic Aims of Discourse." The Writing Teacher's Sourcebook. Ed. Gary Tate and Edward P.J. Corbett. New York: Oxford University Press, 1981. 89-99.

Discusses Kinneavy's "purposes" of composition, stipulating that "no composition program can afford to neglect any of these" (97) as it sets its program goals.

Lindemann, Erika. A Rhetoric for Writing Teachers. New York: Oxford University Press, 1982.

See in particular chapter 10, "Teaching Paragraphing," and 11, "Shaping Discourse," for cogent and practical approaches to teaching arrangement.

Moffett, James. Teaching the Universe of Discourse. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1983.

Chapter 2, "Kinds and Order of Discourse," should be considered required reading for all composition teachers.

Percy, Bernard. The Power of Creative Writing: A Handbook of Insights, Activities, and Information to Get Your Students Involved. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1980.

Contains a wealth of ideas for involving students in

their writing and explains the importance of creative writing activity.

Phelps, Terry O. "What Will They Really Write?" English Journal 75.3 (1986): 81-82.

Stresses the importance of writing in "Real World" occupations. Explains how a student survey of eight different occupations revealed some interesting facts about writing on the job.

Podis, Leonard A. "Teaching Arrangement: Defining a More Practical Approach." College Composition and Communication 31 (1980): 197-204.

A response to Hartwell's article, "Teaching Arrangement: A Pedagogy," with a detailed explanation of how organizational patterns may be taught in a "coherent and teachable sequence." Practical advice.

Sale, Roger. On Writing. New York: Random House, 1970.

An informative, lively book by an experienced teacher of writing. Chapter 3, "Organizing: The Sense that Writing Makes," contains examples of student writing, carefully analyzed by the author for movement, direction, and logical order.

Shaughnessy, Mina. Errors and Expectations: A Guide for the Teacher of Basic Writing. New York: Oxford University Press, 1977.

Chapter 7, "Beyond the Sentence," suggests that basic writers have three particular problems: getting to the "main idea," seeing and creating structure, and moving from the sentence to larger units. Particularly suggestive in that it makes the point that students do not have to have achieved competence at the sentence level before they move on to larger organizational units. Contains practical classroom activities and assignments.

Smolko, Nona K. "Sharing the Spotlight: An Experiment in Student-Centered Writing." English Journal 75.3 (1986): 83-84.

Describes a method for teaching creative writing through student presentations. Students become teachers of writing as they plan and present various activities to the class.

Winterowd, W. Ross, ed. "The Grammar of Coherence."
Contemporary Rhetoric: A Conceptual Background with
Readings. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1975.
225-233.

An excellent introduction to the relationships
(causation, coordination, obversativity, etc.) implied
by transitional devices and grammatical relationships.
Winterowd sees these "coherence" relationships as
constituting a powerful means of invention as well as
form or arrangement.

Wresch, William, ed. The Computer in Composition
Instruction: A Writer's Tool. Urbana, Ill.: NCTE,
1984.

A collection of articles about programs and procedures
teachers have used and developed for teaching writing
with computer-aided instruction.

SCHOOL MAIL

DELIVER TO LAST PERSON NAMED

Department or Office

Name

Department or Office

THE
TRAIT
OF

Ides

Marie Claypoole
Joyce Galletti
John Hay
Thomas McCracken

THE TRAIT OF IDEAS

The Trait of Ideas: What Is It?

Ideas--just what are they? Ideas are the stimulus, the source, the significant somethings, from which springs the need in the writer to communicate, to share with others . . . in short, to write!

What ideas are worth discovering in the school setting? How do students discover them? And what is the role of language arts teachers in all this? All students have the power to develop ideas, but whether those ideas will be expressed and formed in ways which will enable students to grow intellectually depends upon the environment established by teachers and the degree to which students respond to that environment. If we can help students write from what they know and from what they see, hear, and read, and then make that writing their own, then a climate for growth has been set. Our responses to student writing, if we take the role of "reader responders" rather than "teacher examiners," are crucial in demonstrating that ideas are valued in writing.

Responding to students' ideas is the most important thing teachers can do to establish an environment for student growth. Seeing relationships is having an idea, and if ideas are stressed when we react to students' work, then the classroom will not become a place where obedience to convention stifles fresh ways of seeing relationships. Implied throughout this section is that the writing done by students will be varied--in length, in purpose, and in voice. Also implied is that both students and teachers read and write and discover meaning as they do both things.

In writing, idea is the core trait which justifies and enables the students' purpose, direction, style and presentation. This trait, however, is only completed with a reader. That is, the communication of an idea in writing is dependent upon the reader's response as much as it is upon the writer's words. When the reader and writer "connect," an idea can flourish. When no connection occurs, the potential for a student to learn through writing will be limited. Research in cognitive development suggests that the more teachers know about how their students compose, the more likely a rich environment will be present for students to search for fresh ways of seeing relationships, the source of ideas.

The trait of ideas is dependent upon how readers (both

THE TRAIT OF IDEAS

The Trait of Ideas: What Is It?

Ideas--just what are they? Ideas are the stimulus, the source, the significant somethings, from which springs the need in the writer to communicate, to share with others . . . in short, to write!

What ideas are worth discovering in the school setting? How do students discover them? And what is the role of language arts teachers in all this? All students have the power to develop ideas, but whether those ideas will be expressed and formed in ways which will enable students to grow intellectually depends upon the environment established by teachers and the degree to which students respond to that environment. If we can help students write from what they know and from what they see, hear, and read, and then make that writing their own, then a climate for growth has been set. Our responses to student writing, if we take the role of "reader responders" rather than "teacher examiners," are crucial in demonstrating that ideas are valued in writing.

Responding to students' ideas is the most important thing teachers can do to establish an environment for student growth. Seeing relationships is having an idea, and if ideas are stressed when we react to students' work, then the classroom will not become a place where obedience to convention stifles fresh ways of seeing relationships. Implied throughout this section is that the writing done by students will be varied--in length, in purpose, and in voice. Also implied is that both students and teachers read and write and discover meaning as they do both things.

In writing, idea is the core trait which justifies and enables the students' purpose, direction, style and presentation. This trait, however, is only completed with a reader. That is, the communication of an idea in writing is dependent upon the reader's response as much as it is upon the writer's words. When the reader and writer "connect," an idea can flourish. When no connection occurs, the potential for a student to learn through writing will be limited. Research in cognitive development suggests that the more teachers know about how their students compose, the more likely a rich environment will be present for students to search for fresh ways of seeing relationships, the source of ideas.

The trait of ideas is dependent upon how readers (both

mind of the writer is a crucial element in formulating ideas, and the general implication is that students and teachers need to become more aware of this phenomenon in all phases of the writing process.

How and where ideas originate is not precisely known, but theorists agree that ideas do not grow full-blown in the writer's mind only to be transcribed on paper. Rather, during a process of writing, ideas are being discovered, transformed, and refined continuously (Mandel, Shaughnessy, Smith). Mandel says that real thinking goes on subconsciously and that "writing informs the mind." One implication is that many traditional dicta about generating and planning one's ideas (e.g., "think before you write," "follow an outline") may inhibit rather than nurture the development of what a writer eventually says. Several alternative techniques such as free writing or parody appear more suitable activities for enabling ideas.

Ideas seem especially to take root when extensive information is available to the writer (Shaughnessy), at times in the form of literature, at other times in the form of facts. When students can take these data and make them into writing topics, make them their own, the whole process becomes more realistic to students (Glatthorn, Koch and Brazil). Teachers can help the generation and nurturing of ideas by establishing a supportive environment (Christenbury, Elbow). Teachers can minimize their role as evaluators of writing and maximize that of co-writer or helper, especially in the early stages of a writing task (Elbow). Therefore, while it may be impossible to abstract completely the trait of ideas from the total writing context, teachers can within that context help students see relationships which are new.

How Does the Trait of Ideas Develop in Student Writing?

The quality of ideas in writing can be as noticeable in the work of young writers as in older, more mature ones--if the writers choose to use the occasion of writing to tell us as readers something that engages us strongly. As readers, we respond to invitations to take part vicariously in interesting experiences. Those experiences don't have to be unusual or different; in fact, sometimes the most common experiences are the ones that seem particularly engaging, especially if they are ones that we have had too. Take, for

example, Tom*, a fourth grader, who understands instinctively the fact that everyone needs--and probably has had at some time--a "private" place. He says to his reader, "I'm going to tell you where my special place is. You have to swear not to tell anybody, OK? Good." (What a wonderful sense of audience Tom has--and how clearly he indicates his hope that we're interested in him!) His sense of sharing with his reader his hiding place (an area behind a couch) is an open invitation for us as readers to join him. Tom finishes his paper by hoping that his reader has been "inspired" to make a special place of his own too:

. . . Well here it is. What's that? You say you don't see it? Why it's right there, behind the couch. What do you mean what's so special about it? To me it's wonderful because it's quiet, comfy, and if you poke your head out you can see T.V.

I go there almost everyday. What's that? You want to know why I go here? Well mostly to be alone. I espesuly go there to do my homework . . .

Do you know how I keep it private? I drape blaankets over the openings. Well just one more thing to tell you, I. . . . What? You say I inspired you to make a special place? Wow! Someday I'll come over and you can show me you're special place!

Giving readers a chance to share common experiences is also seen in the writing of Jennifer, a high school junior. Notice how Jennifer's topic, a collection of poems, is made important to her--and to the reader. She says that her collection of poems has become a spiritual part of her, a "lifetime of memories," as she calls them. Jennifer deliberately brings us together with her when she ends her paper with a statement that all of us have experiences that time will not erase.

* The paper written by this student and by all students whose names are asterisked in this chapter may be found in the Appendix, "Assessment: A Primer for Teachers" (see Section on Anchor Papers).

Perhaps one of the greatest reasons people collect things is to remember. Take for example, poems. I collect poems, not just any poems, but ones that I have written or that my friends have written. Whenever I read them it reminds me of how I felt at the time. They bring back memories of lost loves, deaths, and old friends. I keep them in a book and when I'm sad, alone, or even afraid I go to that book, open it up and read poems--poems that I have read over a hundred times, but they still give me a special warm feeling. I feel that a collection is not a bunch of "things" but a life-time of memories, and everyone must realize that even if they take their collection of "things" away, whatever it may be, they will still retain the memories that their collection formed--and memories are what no man, no matter how great or strong, can take away.

Unsuccessful essays, on the other hand, offer us as readers no real invitation to be "brought into" a paper or to find in the essay any sense of why we should share the experience of the writer. Jason, a seventh grader, might have capitalized on the opportunity his topic offered to say that his favorite place, a lake, might become in the future a very important place, a place where he could catch larger and more competitive fish. However, Jason drops the chance he has to do something with that experience, and only offers us several sentences, along with an undeveloped idea in the last sentence:

My favorite place is going to the lake and go fishing even though I only catch Blue Gill, Catfish, and Carp, but it's fun but someday when I get older I'm going to a real big lake to catch Bass, Trout, Crappe, & Wallie. Another way of escaping is taking a nap for a few hours at a time.

We might assume that the writing of younger children is distinguished by a lack of specific details, the ability to generate many examples growing with maturity and experience. It is difficult, however, to support that assertion

completely, since talented writers, no matter what age, sense the need of many, surprising, and varied details to make their writing interesting. Notice, for example, these two papers, one by an elementary school student and one by a high school age writer. Joe, the first writer, tells about his tree house, a potentially interesting subject, but he says so little about it that we are disappointed in his paper:

My favorite is my tree house.
It's in my back yards. I like it because
it's a nice places to play, to read, and
to work on my home work and I like to go
there becose I like to work on my hobbys
a lot. And I like it becose I can get
away from my family. And I like it
becose it got patty colors. And it nice
inside.

The writing of Linda, a high school student, is as unsatisfactory as Joe's because of the lack of details and ideas. Instead of offering us any real "development" of the idea she has of her lamb collection, she simply repeats the generalization that the collection was made because lambs "are so cute":

Lambs, not a very exciting subject for some, but I like them. The reason I collect them, is because they are so cute and cuddly, they are also very sweet, you never heard of a lamb attacking and killing anyone.

In my room I have a big shelf I keep my lambs on. All my lambs fill the shelf up. In my collection I have about eight ceramic lambs, and about 8 stuffed lambs. I used to have a poster of a lamb, but it tore in half so I threw it away.

Lambs and sheep, the way I look at them, are so sweet and gentle and couldn't hurt anybody if they wanted to. I have never heard of a sheep attacking anyone and killing them.

If a person wants to start a collection of something I would advise lambs. They are so easy to find, and when you do find them they come in all different sizes and technics.

So lambs I think are more

practical of anything to find and collect, besides they are so cute.

When writers use evocative detail and specific examples, essays become exciting and idea-full. The ability of writers to do this comes, of course, from the experiences they bring to their writing, experiences they have gained from school and from reading, both in and out of the classroom. There can be little doubt that Jeremy, the writer of an essay about a place for dreaming, Pine Tree Grove, is an avid reader as well as imaginer. Notice the details about history, refreshing for a fourth grader, and notice, too that, although there is no physical description of Pine Tree Grove, the reader realizes and responds to the depth of the writer's excitement about "his place":

One of my faverot places is Pine Tree Grove. I like to bring a jug of warm tea and just listen to the birds and drink my tea. When I go to this place I dream of When the state of Ohio was full of Indians, Black Bears, and wolves and other wild animals. Only I and one other share this secret. Many People Think I "live in the past." Mybee I do Mybee thats way I alway's dreamed of being a rider carrying mail for the Poney Express in 1860. Sometimes I wish I was in Mr. Washington's Army fighting for our nation's freedom in 1775. Sometimes I wish I was Casey Jones racing along the silver rails in a steam train. I also have dreams of the future. One of them is to be an Astronaut flying threwh space. Mybee someday I will be the President. I would wark hard for world peace. Even a Doctor to look for cures for bad sicknesses. Well that about wrap's it up for what I do in Pine Tree Grove.

The same quality and quantity of detail is seen in the writing of Joy, a seventh grader, who, like Jeremy, fills a paper with specific things she does when she describes the working of "her own mind." She convinces us that the mind is a place that is unique, a place she likes "because nobody can ever take it away from me. Never!" Listen to the richness of the detail in Joy's description of why her mind is her favorite place to escape to:

. . . I can be anybody, I can do

anything, and I can be anywhere. I could be Tarzan swinging from vine to vine deep in the jungles of Africa or South America. . . .My favorite thing to imagine is that I just won a million dollars from a lotto drawing, and that I take a trip to Hawaii and then put the rest in the bank. Another thing I imagen is that my grandfather was still alive.

What, in summary, makes for successful writing in the trait of ideas? A reader needs to sense the personal commitment the writer has to his or her topic, to realize that whatever is being written about is important, both to the reader as audience, and most importantly, to the writer. The junior high school student, Ellen, who wrote about her room as a place where she goes to relax is headed in the right direction, but Ellen missed every chance she had to do something with her topic, to explore, for example, the "Precious Moments" border at the top of the wall which might have become a powerful symbol of her inner peace in the room. Although the paper has potential for revision, it remains an average attempt here, since the reader does not seem to sense any real commitment on the part of the writer to her subject:

My place to escape from everyone is in my room. I like to go their to do my homework and sometimes read. It's quiet when nobody is in the other rooms. I like to relax and think about all the problems I faced that day. Other times I go their to sleep and clean if necessary. My room is pink and is a cream color on my closet. At the very top by the ceiling it has a boudary which is from the precious moments. My little sister shares the room with me. Half of the time she's not there so I don't have to worry I can always have piece and quiet in my room.

On the other hand, no one can disagree about the way Michael reveals his interest in his idea of his favorite way of relaxing--dancing. Here is this seventh grader's paper:

My favorite way to relax is to dance. I go down in my basement to my dancing room and put on a record and dance all day. Some people, my age would call that work, but to me it is pure

enjoyment. When I am in my relaxation time, no one bothers me. I can just put on my record and do whatever I want. Usually before I eat dinner I will get away from everything and take my stuff downstairs. I will slip on sweat pants, dancing shoes and crank up my radio and set myself free, nothing on my mind. I'm not like the other kids, relax to them, is to do absolutely nothing. To me, that is absolutely boring! The main reason I like to dance, and like to use my free time to practice my previous dance steps I learned at a course. The main reason is to work. It makes me feel good. You don't have to do anything particular to dance. You do not have to strain your muscles, and work to you can't breathe. You just have to set yourself a goal, or look up to a professional dancer Mikhael Baryshinokoff, for example and go with it. Work hard, and you'll find pleasing results. Yet another reason for me liking dancing is anyone can dance if they want to. Just as do your own thing. That is one of the biggest reasons. You can be independent, do what you want and be yourself. So I don't have to sit around doing absolutely nothing. I can have excitement by dancing, it is hard work, but if you like it, it is worth it.

The reader quickly feels the writer's commitment to this idea. The writer rapidly submits detail upon detail illustrating a love of dancing. Moreover, the writer distinguishes the relaxation dancing provides from what most people would see as tedium. Here the freshness of the idea carries the paper and we see even more clearly the real meaning it has for the writer as further illustration (even comparison) is used to develop the thought.

While the development of writers in maturity and experience may be important, it is interesting that skill in the development of the trait of ideas is not as incremental as it is in the other traits. All children, no matter how sophisticated they are or are not--are full of ideas. What we as teachers need to do is provide them with the reassurance that we want to hear about their ideas and that if they feel a commitment to them, we will too. We need to give evidence to students that we are truly appreciative of

and interested in what they are telling us, and we need to provide them with reading and experiences so that they can enrich what they want to say.

TEACHING IDEAS

THE HAT RACK

PURPOSE: To help children generate ideas about occupations as a prewriting activity.

PREPARATION: Gather a number of different hats (e.g., a construction hardhat, a baseball cap, a nurse's cap, a football helmet, a policeman's cap, etc.). Hang the hats on a hat rack or display them on a table.

PRESENTATION: Divide the class into groups of 3-5. Give each group a hat and list of questions that refer to the job of the person who would wear the hat. Have students add questions--

What do I do as a part of my job?

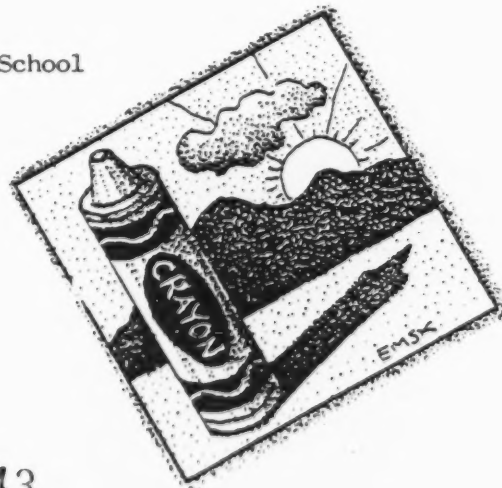
Where do I work?

What do I have to know to do my job?, etc.

Get one child to serve as recorder for the group as they contribute ideas. Then have the group compose a short essay beginning, "My name is _____, and I wear a _____ hat to work." Collect the stories and make them into a book called The Hat Rack.

Remind children that girls can be "firemen" or construction workers and that boys can be nurses!

SOURCE: Marilyn Samuels
Western Reserve Middle School



TEACHING IDEAS

THE SECRET IN THE BOX

PURPOSE: To stimulate ideas for a composition.

PREPARATION: Find a box--the more unusual in shape it is, the better. Put some little object (a pencil, an eraser, a piece of hard candy, etc.) inside the box and tape the box shut.

PRESENTATION: Pass the box around the class, and let children contribute their ideas about what is in the box. Either draw the name of a "winner" or have the class vote on the best idea, and let that child open the box and have the object inside.

PRESENTATION: As a follow-up activity, ask students to bring a box to class in which they have put something they have found around the house (a clothespin, an old sock, etc.). Exchange boxes with partners, and have children guess what's in the box. Then they can open the boxes and retrieve the "prize."

ADDITIONAL

COMMENTS: Before beginning this activity, read to the children M. Jean Craig's The Dragon in the Clock Box (W. W. Norton, 1962). The book, with its illustrations by Kelly Oechsli, will give the children many ideas to think about.

SOURCE: Marilyn Brenner, Jackson Elementary School



ELEMENTARY ♦

TEACHING IDEAS

WHAT IS IT?

PURPOSE: To unleash your students' creativity and imagination.

PREPARATION: Distribute copies of the worksheet to each student.

PRESENTATION: Draw an object or person using the lines on the paper. You may add lines to the picture and then color it in any way you wish. The picture could be of a person, an animal, a place, a thing, etc.

Then use your object to write a story. Use your drawing to illustrate your story or to be the cover of your story.

SOURCE: Adapted by Barbara Brigham, New Middletown Elementary School, from an idea in Learning 85.



ELEMENTARY ♦

WORKSHEET

FOR

WHAT IS IT?

Beginning with the lines below, draw an object. Use any additional lines you like. Color the object any way you wish. Then write a story about your object.



TEACHING IDEAS

THE OBJECT BOX

PURPOSE: To have children imagine what life would be like if they were somebody other than themselves.

PREPARATION: Make an object box. Put in a number of small items like key, yarn, needle, toothbrush, candle, thimble, penny, tongue depressor, playing card, can opener, pencil, thread, button, ice cream spoon, etc.

PRESENTATION: Each child picks one object from the box. Then have the children imagine what it would be like to be the object they have picked. What would my job be? Who would use me? How? Where would I be taken? etc.

Ask the students to write a little story about an exciting experience that happened to themselves as the objects.

SOURCE: Joyce Galiete, Ellsworth Elementary School



TEACHING IDEAS

LET'S TELL A STORY

PURPOSE: To have children generate ideas for a story from pictures.

PREPARATION: Bring to class an assortment of pictures showing some action scene (e.g., a crowd at a football game or basketball game, a group of people working on something, etc.). National Geographic and Smithsonian magazines are good sources of such pictures.

Prepare a list of questions:

Who is in the picture?
What's happening in the picture?
Where is it happening?
When is it happening?
What do you think happened just before this picture was taken?
What will happen after this?, etc.

PRESENTATION: Divide class into groups, and give each group a picture to work on. Have someone record the answers or ideas. Then use the material to write a group story. Illustrate the story by attaching the picture to it.

This activity could be an oral story-telling event too! Tape record the stories for later play-back.

SOURCE: Eleanor E. Capalucci,
Taft Elementary School.
Adapted from J.
Moffett and B. Wagner,
Student-Centered Language Arts and Reading K-13 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1983).



TEACHING IDEAS

THE INCREDIBLE STORY

PURPOSE: To use a story-starter to stimulate a writer's imagination.

PREPARATION: Prepare a story-starter: "A mist mysteriously settles on me for a moment, and then passes on. Suddenly, I begin to shrink. I am only as big as an ordinary house cat when"; or "The funny wizard touched me with his finger and suddenly I grew to be ten feet tall. I saw"

PRESENTATION: Have children contribute ideas to the story. As a follow-up activity, put children in groups and have each group work on a different story starter. The group can then write a story that can be read to the class.

SOURCE: Joyce Galieti, Ellsworth Elementary School



TEACHING IDEAS

A NEW BOOK REPORT

PURPOSE: To provide creative alternatives for the "standard" book report.

PREPARATION: Assign a book for outside reading, based on your recommendations and the students' interests.

PRESENTATION: Have the students do one of the following instead of the "standard" book report format:

1. Come dressed as the main character in the book. Class will interview you, after you tell a little about yourself.
2. Write a journal as the main character of the book living an exciting part of the story.
3. Turn an exciting scene of the book into a short play. Get several classmates to help you "produce" it.
4. Bring to class an item associated with the story and explain how the item is important in the book.
5. Imagine that the book is going to be made into a TV mini-series. Tell the class how it will be set up.

SOURCE: The Idea Group

MIDDLE SCHOOL ♦♦



TEACHING IDEAS

THE REPORTER GAME

PURPOSE: To conduct an interview to generate ideas for a news article.

PREPARATION: Students should know the techniques of conducting interviews and writing news articles.

PRESENTATION: You are a reporter for your school newspaper. A famous person (a sports star, a movie star, the President, etc.) is holding a town meeting in your town or city. Because you're the star reporter for your school paper, you are allowed to attend a special news conference with this person before the meeting begins.

Write out ten questions that you would ask the celebrity in such a special news conference. Since you will be writing an article for your paper later on, try to make your questions interesting. Also try to think of things that other students in your school would like to know about or questions they would like answers to.

ADDITIONAL

COMMENTS: Things to remember as you plan your questions:

1. One-word answers do not fill up very much space in a reporter's column. Plan at least four questions that will require an explanation.
2. Don't ask questions that everyone already knows the answer to.

SOURCE: Adapted from a suggestion by Marie Claypoole, Canfield Middle School.



TEACHING IDEAS

STORY-STARTERS WITH A DIFFERENCE

PURPOSE: To get students to generate ideas about a subject from an assigned story-starter.

PREPARATION: Duplicate the worksheet that contains five different story-starters on the one subject, "The Meal."

PRESENTATION: Divide the class into five groups. Give each group one story-starter, and have them generate ideas through brainstorming about how it should be finished. Let the group write the story and then share it with the class orally.

SOURCE: Adapted from a suggestion by Marie Claypoole, Canfield Middle School



WORKSHEET
FOR
STORY-STARTERS WITH A DIFFERENCE

- I. It was a hot and tiring day when the school bus deposited me at my driveway. I walked into the kitchen and noticed a wonderful aroma in the room. Mother was there, standing at the kitchen sink. She turned around and said, "You're going to love the meal I fixed for the family tonight. It's"
- II. The alien ship had landed in the field near my house and looked threatening as I walked close to it. Suddenly, the door opened and a ramp descended to the ground. A creature, obviously an alien from another planet, came down the ramp and took me by the hand to lead me into the sinister-looking ship. When we got inside, the alien said, "We were about to have dinner. Won't you join us?" I agreed, and we went to the table where I saw a strange looking meal before me. . . .
- III. I had taken a job baby sitting the local "bad kid" of the neighborhood, and I was completely exhausted after chasing the child around the house all afternoon. I sat down wearily on the couch in the living room. Suddenly, he announced that he is going into the kitchen to fix himself a snack. Then, he appeared at the doorway with his "meal"
- IV. The mad scientist had captured me and was holding me in a lonely cottage. I was strapped in a chair, unable to move or escape. Professor Killall came out of the kitchen, bearing a tray on which there was some food. He sneered, "Now, you are going to eat this!"
- V. I was having a wonderful dream last night in which I saw myself in the world's best restaurant. The food was everything I have always wanted to eat, so I ordered the meal I have always dreamed about. . . .

TEACHING IDEAS

ALL THE NEWS

PURPOSE: To have students do simple research to gather information and ideas about a subject.

PREPARATION: Select a period of time in the past, based on some reading the students have done. (For example, they might use Classical Greece if the students have been reading myths, or Colonial America if they were reading history of that period). Put students into groups, and give each group a copy of a newspaper.

PRESENTATION: The children are to compose a newspaper on the period of assignment. This will mean that the group will have to decide what kinds of information (news events, social announcements, want ads, play reviews and entertainment, weather, etc.) to include. Assign parts to research and people to do the writing. Give the newspaper a name. Set it up like a "real" newspaper, complete with columns, ads, a masthead, etc.

SOURCE: Peggy Price, Poland Middle School

MIDDLE SCHOOL ♦♦



TEACHING IDEAS

THE JOURNAL CALENDAR

PURPOSE: To have students record ideas in a journal for future writing assignments.

PREPARATION: Prepare a large calendar for the month, making large boxes for each date. Fill in the boxes with journal entry assignments. Leave several boxes blank, marked "Student's Choice." Such topics might be: "What funny thing has happened today?"; "On the way to school today I saw . . ."; "If I won the Lottery, I would . . ."; "If I could live at another time in history, I would like to live . . ."; etc.

PRESENTATION: Use the first five minutes of each class period, ask students to read through journals and pick one topic to expand into a short paper.

SOURCE: Judy Tesone, Hayes Junior High



TEACHING IDEAS

LOCAL HISTORY

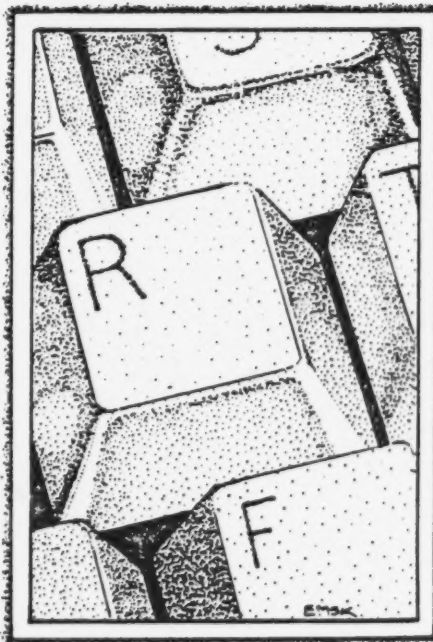
PURPOSE: To have students research the history of their own school to gather ideas for a writing project.

PREPARATION: Divide the class into writing teams of about 4-5 students each. Each team is to select some part of the school to investigate--the construction of the building, the sports program, the school newspaper, the trophy case, etc.

PRESENTATION: They are to conduct research on the item they have chosen. Research might include interviewing people, looking through old yearbooks, looking for local newspaper coverage, etc.

The results of the research should be publishable as a small pamphlet called "Facts about _____ High School"

SOURCE: The Idea Group

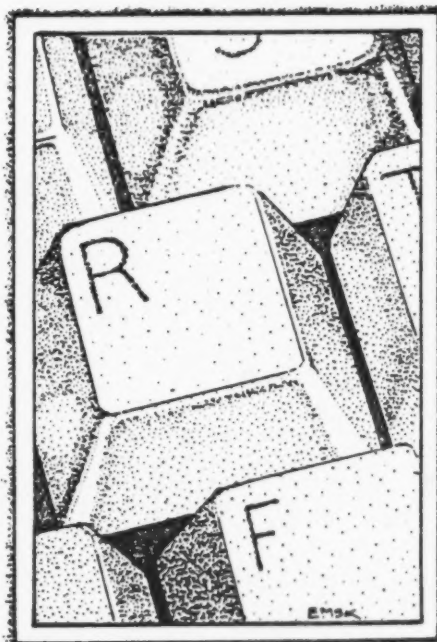


TEACHING IDEAS

HISTORICAL DATA GATHERING

PURPOSE: To use historical data gathering to generate ideas for writing.

PRESENTATION: Have students conduct research and/or interviews to obtain data from which a written composition will be created.



Some Suggested Activities:

Choose an important historical period. Explore the popular culture of the period. Have students create compositions pertaining to fashions, games, and fads of the time, etc.

Have students interview parents and grandparents regarding things they did when they were young--books they read, the radio shows they listened to, movies they watched, heroes they had, and the games and entertainment they enjoyed. Have students compare these activities to the activities of today.

Have students bring in their parents'/grandparents' school yearbooks and picture albums. Have students discuss the values, interests, and fads of the times represented by these books. Students can compare and contrast any one period of time to today.

SOURCE: Adapted from Stephen N. Judy and Susan J. Judy, The English Teacher's Handbook (Cambridge, Mass.: Winthrop, 1979), 168-169.

TEACHING IDEAS

EXPRESSING OPINIONS ON A SCHOOL PROBLEM

PURPOSE: To provide the students the opportunity to express their ideas on a given school problem. The problem may be somewhat controversial.

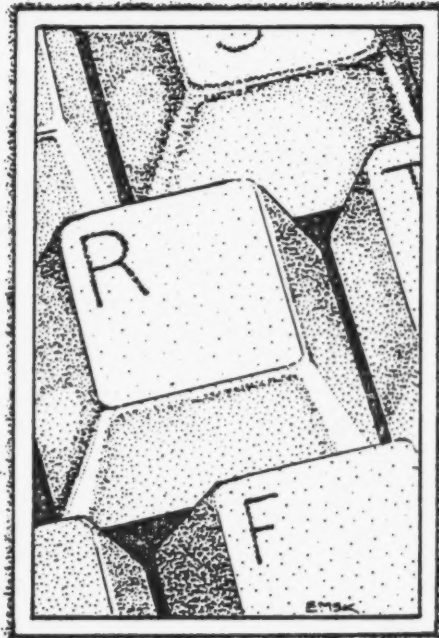
PRESENTATION: Pose a school problem, or a problem from literature, for the class. The problem should be one that everyone is familiar with and that has caused some controversy among students.

Examples:

1. A rule against wearing tank-tops to school.
2. The closing of the student smoking center.
3. A rule that allows only seniors to drive to school.
4. A rule that reading assignments should be established by student choice, not teacher assignment.

In small groups, brain-storming sessions are to be held with one student acting as recorder. When ideas have been exhausted, members of each group will work together to organize them under separate categories. The activity may stop at this point as merely an exercise to generate ideas, or it may continue into composition writing.

SOURCE: Adapted from Theodore W. Hipple, Teaching English in the Secondary School (New York: Macmillan, 1973), 296, #8.

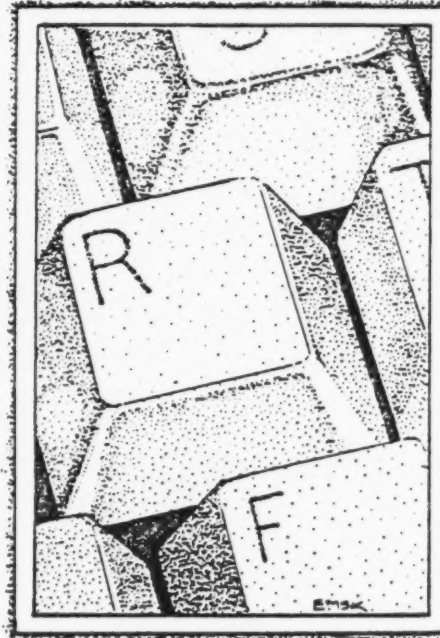


TEACHING IDEAS

THINKING THROUGH WRITING

PURPOSE: To aid student in finding ideas.

PRESENTATION: Have students write nonstop for a set period of time. Start with 1-2 minutes and build up as students gain confidence. Encourage nonstop writing with no editing or stopping to review the idea.



1. Try this as a class warm-up several times a week.
2. Allow students to choose the topic.
3. Ask students to react to a piece of literature.
4. Suggest a topic (e.g., President Reagan, Michael Jackson, fear, baseball).
5. Use this as a journal entry.
6. Use as a beginning to a composition.
7. After they have finished writing, have students exchange papers and continue where the original stopped.
8. Try Peter Elbow's "focused free writing." Pass the freewriting to student's right. Have reader underline an interesting sentence and then write, beginning with that sentence. (This activity can be repeated several times.)

SOURCE: Adapted from Theodore W. Hipple, Teaching English in the Secondary School (New York: Macmillan, 1973), 296, #8.

TEACHING IDEAS

MAKING CONNECTIONS

PURPOSE: To aid students in thinking metaphorically, and to force them to make connections between dissimilar ideas for the purpose of increasing the richness of their compositions.

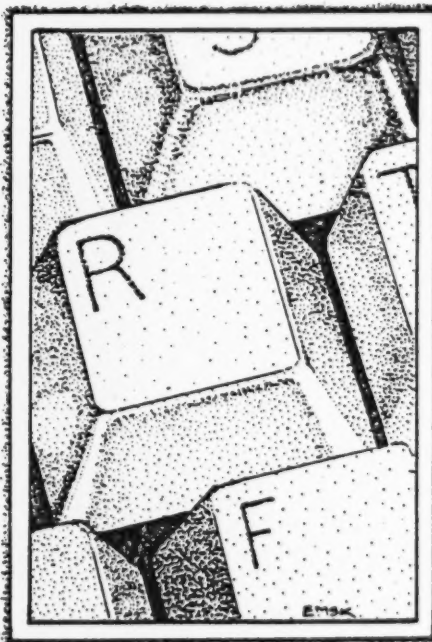
PRESENTATION: Break the class up into small-group discussion sessions geared toward the generation of ideas. Set the ground rules of acceptance of every idea as useful--nothing is too far out, nothing is too off the wall. Encourage the unusual. After these strategies have been discussed, ask students to remember their diversity when they are composing.

1. Pair pictures that seem to you totally dissimilar. Ask each group to study the pair, and then brainstorm as many similarities as possible in a given time limit. Rotate the pairs among groups, and finally share the answers. (Same strategy might be done with objects.)

2. Give each group an object, and then ask it to come up with as many uses for the object as possible. Overlook the obvious. (Remember the man with the sand pail in the McDonald's hamburger ad who comes up with hundreds of ideas for using a sand pail.)

3. Give each group or individual a list of clichéd similes. (Quiet as a mouse, cool as a cucumber, hot as fire, etc.) Come up with new ideas for the underlined sections. How many can you come up with? This might also be done by replacing the first word in each comparison.

SOURCE: The Idea Group



Bibliography

Brannon, Lil, Melinda Knight and Vara Neverow-Turk. Writers Writing. Montclair, N.J.: Boynton/Cook, 1982.

"Strategies dramatized in this book are those of real writers." "Not the usual hogwash about writing." Also contains students' writing ideas for activities.

Carter, Candy, and Zora Rashkis, eds. Ideas for Teaching English in the Junior High and Middle School. Urbana, Ill.: NCTE, 1980.

Includes a collection of nearly two hundred teaching ideas submitted by individual teachers. A solid, practical approach to the teaching of English.

Christenbury, Leila, and Patricia P. Kelly. Questioning: A Path to Critical Thinking. Urbana, Ill.: ERIC Clearing House on Reading and Communication Skills, 1983.

Discusses theory and research in support of using questioning techniques to help students generate ideas; provides several classroom activities for application of the questioning process.

Elbow, Peter. "Embracing Contraries in the Teaching Process." College English 45 (1983): 327-39.

Makes a useful distinction between our roles as facilitators or guides and that of graders or evaluators. Provides specific suggestions for reconciling the two positions.

---. Writing with Power: Techniques for Mastering the Writing Process. New York: Oxford University Press, 1981.

Designed as a practical handbook for writers who want to improve the import of what they write. Provides specific and pragmatic discussion of various writing problems. Many theoretical points require consideration by all writers/teachers; "Writing of almost any kind is exhibitionist."

---. Writing without Teachers. London: Oxford University Press, 1973.

First section of text discusses ways to help students

generate more and better ideas. Later chapters cover methods of helping writers express ideas better. Combines practical application and theory. Interesting commentary on editing: "Editing must be cut-throat."

Frank, Marjorie. If You're Trying to Teach Kids How to Write, You've Got to Have This Book! Nashville, Tenn.: Incentive Books, 1979.

Glatthorn, Allan A. "Demystifying the Teaching of Writing." Language Arts 59 (1982): 722-25.

Emphasis on being realistic about teaching the writing process. Suggests giving students topics they want, using real problems, and teaching the thinking process used by the assignment.

Hipple, Theodore W. Teaching English in the Secondary School. New York: Macmillan, 1973.

Collection of ideas for teaching literature, composition, grammar and usage on the high school level. Chapters treat problems involved with teaching students of varying abilities ranging from basic to gifted. Appendices with classroom activities and resource material.

Judy, Stephen N., and Susan J. Judy. The English Teacher's Handbook. Cambridge, Mass.: Winthrop, 1979.

Extensive list of ideas for the teaching of English. Provides sections in literature and reading, teaching composition, language study and multimedia English. Ideas of the text are meant to be catalysts to the instructor's own thinking.

Koch, Carl, and James N. Brazil. Strategies for Teaching the Composition Process. Urbana, Ill.: NCTE, 1978.

Examines the prewriting, writing, and post writing stages of composition with emphasis on avoiding model and exercise approaches. Suggests teachers help students generate their topics through values exploration and consensus decision (group discussion).

Lindemann, Erika. A Rhetoric for Writing Teachers. New York: Oxford University Press, 1982.

Addresses teachers who wish to sharpen their teaching of writing. Covers philosophy, research and practical

techniques of improving instruction. A very valuable source.

Mandel, Barrett J. "Losing One's Mind: Learning to Write and Edit." College Composition and Communication 29 (1978): 362-68.

Suggests teachers separate the way writers get their thoughts on paper from the step-by-step process. Author contends "consciousness is focused in the point of the pen."

---. "The Writer Writing Is Not at Home." College Composition and Communication 31 (1980): 370-77.

Discusses the idea that writing is not a conscious activity which can be observed; encourages "nurturing" fresh insight by use of "free" writing, rote writing, modeling and parodying.

Moffett, James, and Betty Jane Wagner. Student Centered Language Arts and Reading, K-13: A Handbook for Teachers. 2nd ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1976.

Clear division of material into theoretical implications of language arts instruction versus practical application. Copious listing of subtopics in table of contents, helpful in locating information on a specific area of interest.

National Council of Teachers of English. Ideas Plus: A Collection of Practical Ideas. Urbana, Ill.: NCTE, 1984.

"Assembled at headquarters . . . written by classroom teachers across the country." A compilation of classroom-tested ideas that come with Plus subscription to the English Journal.

Parker, R.P. "Writing Courses for Teachers: From Practice to Theory." College Composition and Communication 33 (1982): 411-19.

Stresses the need for teachers to create an environment of "social interaction," wherein writers as members of a "community" share their ideas and the writing experience.

Platts, Mary E. Anchor: A Handbook of Vocabulary Discovery Techniques for the Classroom Teacher. New York:

Educational Service, 1970.

Rosenblatt, Louise N. Literature as Exploration. 3rd ed.
New York: Noble and Noble, 1976.

A well known and highly respected work on students' response to literature "as a vital personal experience." Valuable perspective for teachers concerned about helping students generate ideas.

Shaughnessy, Mina P. "Diving In: An Introduction to Basic Writing." College Composition and Communication 27 (1976): 234-39.

Presents a challenge for the teacher of basic writing to make "the decision to remediate himself, to become a student of new disciplines." Reasons that teachers go through stages of development in the classroom.

---. Errors and Expectations: A Guide for the Teacher of Basic Writing. New York: Oxford University Press, 1977.

Offers a pragmatic approach to helping students improve their writing skills; written with clarity, insight, and understanding of problems facing teachers and students of writing. Based on the study of 4,000 essays of college freshmen.

Smith, Frank. "Myths of Writing." Language Arts 58 (1981): 792-98.

Examines directions teachers can take for making writing more enjoyable and productive for their students as well as for themselves. Explores several writing "myths" including the myth that "writing is learned from instruction."

Sommers, Nancy. "Responding to Student Writing." College Composition and Communication 33 (1982): 148-56.

Finds that teachers give contradictory messages in comments on students' papers and make it difficult for them to tell what is least important from what is most important. Concludes that ideas take precedence over editorial comments.

---. "Revision Strategies of Student Writers and Experienced Adult Writers." College Composition and Communication 31 (1980): 378-88.

After studying the two groups, Sommers concludes that student writers make primarily lexical changes in revision, based upon rules they have been taught, viewing their compositions in a linear way. However, experienced writers actually revise as they compose, writing recursively, and make changes at all levels of revision.

Spencer, Zane A. Flair: A Handbook of Classroom Ideas to Motivate the Teaching of Elementary Creative Writing. New York: Educational Service, 1970.

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SCHOOL MAIL

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Department or Office

Name

Department or Office

THE
TRAIT
OF

Style

Bege K. Bowers
Margaret J. Ford
Joan Schmitzer
Marilou Bonte Slagle

THE TRAIT OF STYLE

The Trait of Style: What Is It?

If you're like most people, you probably have trouble defining "style," but you know it when you see it. And you certainly receive plenty of advice about how to achieve it. Open any department store catalogue or fashion magazine, and you will see how to decorate your bathroom or how to dress "with style." You will quickly surmise that certain fashions, colors, and textures are "in" style while others are "out." In a typical magazine issue, you will learn how styles have changed since last year, how to choose a style to "hide" a particular figure flaw, how to dress "safely" for a job interview. As you flip through the pages, you will doubtless see styles that you like and styles that you wouldn't wear anywhere. And just when you think you've found a style that's "right" for you, you will be told not to copy it but to "personalize" it and make it your own: Diana, Princess of Wales, and Tom Selleck may be striking models, but their styles will not necessarily do for you.

Many of the same principles apply to writing style as well. Like most other analogies, the analogy between fashion styles and writing styles eventually breaks down. Nevertheless, it is useful not only for understanding style ourselves but also for teaching our students about style. When teachers of writing are asked to define "style," their responses are often confusing or ambiguous--and understandably so. Of all the traits that characterize effective writing, good style is perhaps the most elusive. Most teachers would agree, however, that the artistic use of style often distinguishes an A paper from a B paper. Most would agree, too, that some compositions are so completely neutral that they appear to possess no style at all. Yet it is important to note that all papers possess style; there is no such thing as stylelessness. How many times have we gone to an NCTE or MLA convention and heard an "outsider" say, "They must be teachers"? Others may perceive us as dowdy, plain, or tweedy, but they recognize us by our style nonetheless.

Some styles are simply more expressive, more appropriate for a given context, or more engaging than others. Thus, we refer to our students' styles with labels such as "good" or "bad," "imaginative" or "dull," "distinctive" or "nondistinctive," "precise" or "flowery." And the style that works for one paper (a technical report, for example) may be inappropriate for another (a personal narrative). In other words, style--like other aspects of composition--is highly

dependent upon rhetorical context. Usually, we don't wear sneakers to the symphony or a tux to the ballpark, even though we may see a wide array of styles either place. Either consciously or unconsciously--by training, by habit, or by osmosis--good writers make stylistic choices: choices that reflect their personality (or in more sophisticated writing, a persona); their attitudes toward a subject; their awareness of audience(s); and their ultimate purpose in writing.

At the word level, these choices begin with vocabulary, diction, and the connotations of words. But style extends beyond individual words to the sentence level and to the essay as a whole. It includes, among other matters, sentence structure (smoothness, variety, placement, and force), voice, tone, mood, rhythm, figures of speech, and rhetorical devices. Historically, style has been dubbed the "manner" (as opposed to the "matter") of composition, although the classical rhetoricians did not intend for style to supersede content or any other aspect of composition. We can't decide how to say something until we have decided what to say and to whom. If style is deliberately contrived to disguise "flaws" in the content, the reader may feel deceived. As denouncers of "rhetoric" in its pejorative sense have argued for years, style divorced from content is "empty," a mere "bag of tricks." However, style wedded to content gives an essay "life."

It is important, therefore, to note some of the pitfalls that teachers may encounter in trying to shape a student's style. In fact, composition texts frequently talk about style when the word styles would be more apropos. One of our favorite warnings about personal styles appeared in Richard Harris's Hints on Advocacy (1879), a rhetoric book written for lawyers. Although the wording suggests the sexist mindset of the nineteenth century, it also says something important about style: "To imitate a successful man's style is like a short man putting on a tall man's coat. However well it fitted the one, it is sure to look ridiculous on the other." Or as Kurt Vonnegut put it several years ago in a popular ad for International Paper, to achieve a "winning" style, "sound like yourself." If as teachers we try to clone stylistic replicas either of ourselves or of other writers we admire, we may limit our students' options, deny their individuality, and ignore the desirability of different styles for different writers and different purposes--perhaps even within a single piece of writing.

Describing style as both rhetorical (chosen for purposes of communication) and individual (somehow expressive of a

writer's very "self") points out some of the difficulties inherent in teaching our students about writing style(s). Some of history's most distinctive authors probably would not have fared well in a technical writing class, but where would the world of literature be without its Faulkners and its Woolfs? Just how much should we try to shape our students' styles? At what point does the acceptance or rejection of various styles constitute a form of politics inappropriate in the classroom--or anywhere else for that matter? And how do we handle collaborative writing assignments?

We encountered some of these difficulties ourselves in writing this chapter. When the emphasis of Teacher to Teacher shifted from assessment to teaching and we began to revise the chapter on style, we found that our writing styles evolved fairly naturally in response to the new purpose. Teaching is generally a less "formal" activity than is assessment--a difference reflected in the conversational, less formal style of portions of the revised chapter. We wanted our more direct tone, like our choices of vocabulary, examples, and analogies, to suggest a stronger sense of ourselves--and you--as teachers. At the same time, however, our own individual styles and our new informality created problems. The varying personal styles, and the styles of the original and revised texts, didn't always mesh--and they still don't. We opted for "personality," particularly in this first section, thereby gaining readability but sacrificing on occasion consistency, not only within our own chapter but in relation to other chapters in the book as well. In addition, we risked offending those of you who prefer a more "scholarly," formal approach. If you fall into this latter category, take heart: we felt the section on research was readable and appropriate as it was, so we did very little to alter the more formal style.

What Research Says about the Trait of Style

Not surprisingly, theorists tend to "take sides" on the issues we have raised in the preceding discussion. Some writers advance the "individualistic theory," insisting that style is a matter of personality--that "style is the man." Trying to change a student's style very forcibly is thus an invasion of privacy and even morally questionable. Such writers argue that students should be urged to express themselves in whatever manner they choose, or at least to discover "their own style." Other theorists, especially those interested in linguistic studies, contend that style cannot be separated from content, for to change form is to change meaning. For these theorists, style can be taught,

but not independently. Yet a third group of theorists maintains that form and content, at least for pedagogical purposes, can be considered separately.

As we might expect, there are also those who suggest that we as teachers may actually hurt our students' styles in the process of "teaching." With young students, or developing writers at any age, we should encourage fluency and imagination rather than "correctness." Students, including the very young, acquire rhythm, expressive vocabulary, and other aspects of style naturally--through listening to stories, through reading, through everyday conversation. Perhaps we can do more for these students by permitting them to read and offering them rich "experiences" than by consciously trying to teach them "English." If we emphasize such matters as spelling and punctuation, they will "play it safe" and simply avoid writing those words they don't know how to spell, as well as those constructions they can't punctuate "correctly."

If, however, style can and should in fact be taught and learned as a distinct trait of writing, teachers and students need to become aware of the stylistic options available to writers when they compose and revise. We as teachers will want to design assignments that contribute to the students' development of a range of options and to their strategies for choosing among those options. One of the most commonly suggested teaching techniques is having students analyze and then imitate "good" style--that is, the style of professional writers of what is generally considered good prose. This analysis might include determining the average length and variety of sentences and paragraphs; categorizing the kinds of verbs and noting their relative proportions; examining diction, types and positions of subordination, repetition, parallelism--all the stylistic devices in a piece of prose that can be pointed to.

The assumption here is that as students become more conscious of another author's stylistic choices, they become more conscious of their own choices. In fact, students can analyze their own writing much as they analyze the writing of professionals. A word of warning is in order, however: if stylistic analysis or imitation does not include discussion of the relation of stylistic features to audience, purpose, and effect, and if students are not then encouraged to experiment and develop their own styles (i.e., to make their own choices), it may simply become an exercise in mathematical manipulation. We must constantly remind ourselves and our students that good style is more than the "sum of the parts"; x number of complex sentences + y number

of introductory phrases and a metaphor or two do not necessarily equal effective style. Focusing on imitation and stylistic analysis may also place too strong an emphasis on writing as a finished product or artifact, beyond the reach of the typical student.

More recently, researchers have argued that the analysis and imitation of others' writing actually does little to help students with their own writing styles, which students must discover, perhaps inductively, in the very process of composing and revising. Whether or not imitation is the basis for the teaching of style, to teach style as a unique trait assumes that much of the finished product in writing is the result of deliberation and conscious effort. Although it is true that some students do, for a variety of reasons, show originality of expression in their writing from the outset, mature style--such researchers would argue--is developed through experimentation and frequent practice, and only after a person has learned to state ideas clearly and accurately. Style heightens the effectiveness of anything that is said but is not a substitute for basic sense.

When in the writing process style is to be taught is also a matter of debate. Some researchers feel that style is a characteristic series of choices made throughout the process of writing: in the discovery of ideas, in the arrangement of ideas, and in the presentation of those ideas.

Some contend, for example, that writing is recursive--that writers are always making stylistic choices as they reread phrases, sentences, or sections before advancing with their piece of writing. Other researchers maintain, however, that it is in the revision stage that writers most often weigh choices and produce the stylistic features that come about from deliberate choice. (If our own experience is any indication, some writers make stylistic changes as they go, while others wait until the draft is completed.)

Finally, a word about assessment: although there have been numerous suggestions for teaching style--imitation, practice in sentence transformations, sentence combining--little has been suggested for the assessment of style as a unique trait of writing. Most attempts at assessing the trait have relied on some sort of comparison. We are advised to compare our students' writing with papers, professional and otherwise, that exhibit those stylistic features considered to be effective or good. We must remember, though, that the assessment of style is perhaps more subjective than the evaluation of other traits; what turns one reader on may well turn another reader off. In addition, we must examine our own process of teaching and

assessment very carefully. Research has interestingly shown that classroom teachers urge students to write in a plain, direct style but in fact reward students for being complex and verbose.

How Does the Trait of Style Develop in Student Writing?

Now that we have examined some of the controversies surrounding the teaching of style, what can we expect in our students' writing? Not all of the characteristics of "good" style appear in a single paper, certainly, but many of them do. As we assessed student papers at three grade levels during Project ARETE, we were able to see students--all the way from poor to proficient in writing--developing and exhibiting stylistic distinctiveness in their own way. However, a word of reservation is in order. Although we looked at hundreds of papers at each grade level, we did not study the writing of individual students as they progressed from one grade level to the next. Thus, we must not be too dogmatic in our assumptions concerning the development of style over time.

With writing, as with fashions, we know effective style when we see it--or in the case of writing, when we hear it. At any level--elementary, junior high, or high school--superior style stands out because the paper sounds different from the run-of-the-mill paper. In the following composition, written by a high school student, the writer transforms ordinary words skillfully, almost magically, into something more:

Ken Wilson was born at the wrong time, in the wrong place. He has read and reread the great military campaigns of Hannibal, Caesar, Napoleon, and Lee. He wants, above all, an empire. In a way, he has achieved his goal. Ken controls an army numbered in the thousands. The army threatens no one, and the "empire" is in Ken's mind. Ken collects toy soldiers.

The soldiers are from many different times and places. His polyglot army consists of Greeks, Romans, Crusaders, Britons, Americans, and Germans. Ken has witnessed dozens of battles, from Marathon to Blenheim to Normandy. He emerges victorious almost all the time; after all, he always knows

the enemies next move.

Still, controlling an empire does extract a price. Maintaining order requires a great deal of time, so Ken possesses no social life, and his grades are not what they should be. But his empire means a lot to him. It gives him an illusion of power, a nitch in the world, a place of refuge.

Will Ken give up his "empire" when he leaves home? Perhaps. Maybe he will try to get a new empire, only this one may be a real one. Some laugh, but they also laughed at Abraham, and the Jews in Palestine. Until then, Ken will continue to dominate his make-believe world. And what's wrong with that? After all, a man's home is his castle.

It hardly matters that the diction and vocabulary are unexceptional and sometimes weak ("extract" instead of "exact"/"a great deal"/"a lot"). The "magic" of the student's essay is its rhythm: the musical, unexpected combinations of concrete words (beginning with Ken Wilson) rendered in a narrative, almost fictional tone ("at the wrong time, in the wrong place"); series after series of prepositional phrases, nouns, and noun phrases--strategically placed, balanced, and parallel; questions followed by answers; long sentences followed by short; and so on. If at first glance the sentence constructions seem simple, they are actually sophisticated and varied. Compound sentences are ably balanced--so well, in fact, that the lack of subordination does not make the paper sound immature. Individual readers may find some devices (the short, climactic sentence at the end of the first paragraph/the first rhetorical question and subsequent fragment) more effective than others (the second rhetorical question and the closing cliché), but all will agree that the writer's style "captivates" the reader and gives the essay "life."

Seldom do we observe such extended examples of "magical" style in the writing of elementary and junior high school students, but the first grader who writes "Wunce there was a pink pokadctted elafant" has already begun to acquire an "ear" for rhythm, as has the fourth grader who writes "I have dreams about scary things, beautiful things, impossible things." In the writing of fourth graders we may also find examples of natural, rhythmic dialogue even before the students have learned the conventions of representing it: "I said do you wont to help me paint it. He said sure I'll help you paint it. So we painted it blue and red. I said how

does it look. He said awesome." And even though we probably will not find sophisticated, extended metaphors like Ken's "empire," we may on very rare occasions see simple figures of speech or successful comparisons:

In the winter the snow falls and sticks to the tree. Then it looks like a giant powder puff.

Songwriting is one of my many hobbies. I love to sing but I can't reach high notes way at the top! I don't like to because I may strain my voice and that sounds utterly ridiculous. It's like comparing my very high notes with an old witch's screech!!

In none of these cases would we want to maim the students' superior style by focusing on correctness!

In addition, the most expressive fourth grade writers may show their sense of "voice" graphically, through underlining and punctuation--"No one has ever found out where I like to go until now and I especially do not want my brother or sister to know!!!!" They may also choose vivid adjectives, especially for colors--"In the summer it gets yellow-green leaves, but in fall it gets prettier than ever with its goldish-orange leaves"--vary sentence openings, use pronouns to avoid choppy repetition, and subordinate some clauses to others:

. . . .When I want to be alone, I often go in my yard and draw pictures or write songs. The place isn't where you can't see me but it's just out in the open. If I don't want to be disturbed, I just tell the person when they come I don't want to be bothered. This place is in a section near my back porch. It's just a mound of bark chips, and a couple bushes.

And even if they use subordination sparingly, they will certainly have mastered the structure of compound sentences.

By the time students with the most captivating styles reach the junior high or middle school levels, we may see quite sophisticated writing. In addition to sentence variety and colorful vocabulary ("the breeze flows"/"the lake glistens"/"the river gurgles or rushes"/"the fish splashes"),

students may attempt more difficult sentence patterns. Despite its problem with pronoun agreement, the following selection, with its balanced, parallel structure, represents a seventh grader's mastery of rhythm: "Some times a character becomes so real that you want to reach out to them when they're sad, help them when they have a problem." Furthermore, seventh grade writers, like Amanda,* may use more--and more successful--figures of speech ("trees rustle as if they're trying to talk to you"/"everything seems to mount up and start to rumble like a volcano") than do younger writers, as well as occasional extended metaphors:

When I feel like this I go to Fathering
Woods, where I can leave the material
world behind me and explor my heart. . .
. Fathering Woods is not one place.
Fathering Woods is every forest and place
where nature is untouched by human
destruction. . . .

As this metaphor makes apparent, the writing of seventh graders may be more abstract than that of younger students; however, it may also be sharp, immediate, and detailed. Notice Mark's* essay:

Two seconds on the clock! The score is
deadlocked at 102-102. This is the
seventh and deciding game of the NBA
World Championship. I'm on the foul line
preparing for my hopeful winning shot.
Since we're playing at the Boston Garden
the crowd is on their feet in a frenzy.
The ball is in the air it's going

In terms of stylistic techniques, the former two passages bear little relation to each other. Yet, each is exceptional, and each develops a "voice" that extends throughout the entire composition.

Now it's time for a final word of warning. If your own students seldom produce passages as stylistically effective as the ones here, don't be alarmed. We deliberately

* The papers written by these students and by all students whose names are asterisked in this chapter may be found in the Appendix, "Assessment: A Primer for Teachers" (see Section on Anchor Papers).

represented the most advanced styles at each grade level since such passages form the greatest contrast to the "average" writing we all read every day. We will conclude now with a few examples of especially poor style to show what, unfortunately, we may expect at the other end of the spectrum.

Stylistically, there is little differentiation between the following passages--written at the fourth, seventh, and eleventh grades, respectively:

And sometimes I even hide things there
like All my stickers my knife And my bank
to And my Chinese stars. (fourth grade)

I like to be in my room. I have a hobby
of horses. I get them every Christmas. I
get a different model horse. I get lots
of stuffed animals. (fourth grade)

The way I escape is I ask my mom if I can
go some where and if she says yes then I
get on my motorcycle and go back in the
fields and drive around for a while and
then I go down to the neighbors and ask
them if they want to go riding there
three wheelers back in the field and they
say yes. (seventh grade)

I get home. I do my homework. I have a
list of things to do. I like the spring.
(seventh grade)

One reason why people collect things is
because they like it. I like to collect
magazines and posters. I have every
single magazine which Michael Jackson is
in. I collect everything about him. He
is my idol. I collect all kinds of
pictures and articles. I collect all his
albums and records. I collect things
which remind me of him. Like the big
white gloves he wears and the kind of
clothes. Just everything I can get a
hold of. This collection is so important
to me because I love him. I want to have
everything I can which will remind me of
him, and if he does ever fade- away,
which I know he wont, I will always
remember him. Just by reading everything

I've collected and all my posters and everything. (eleventh grade)

In all of these cases, the style is unimaginative, immature, and uninteresting--in a word, ineffective. If the vocabulary is singularly inexpressive, words are also awkwardly (sometimes endlessly) strung together--not for effect, but because the students apparently don't "know better." Subordination, ineffectively done, actually weakens rather than strengthens the "flow." As a result, the passages either seem to go on forever or sound choppy and discordant, almost as if the writers were "tone-deaf."

Perhaps, these weaker students are the ones, for whatever reason, to whom a sense of style does not come "naturally." Perhaps, too, they are the ones for whom wider reading and broader experiences will make a difference--particularly at the lower grade levels. Surely, we owe it to these students, as well as to those who will read their writing for the rest of their school careers and thereafter, to do what we can to help them build the sense of style they somehow seem to lack. Only creativity and further research will show the best methods to achieve our goal.

TEACHING STYLE

ADD THE ADJECTIVES

PURPOSE: To improve style through the use of descriptors.

PREPARATION: Teachers should acquaint themselves with the story. Students should know what adjectives are and their use. Prepare copies of the story for each student.

PRESENTATION: Using Children's Literature as a Springboard for Teaching Style:

One type of experience we can provide for our children to help them improve their style is to have them write their own descriptors. Through the wordless sections of stories such as the following one, students will increase the quantity of their verbal output, express their ideas more precisely, and experiment with figurative or creative uses of language.

In the following story written by one of our secondary students for elementary students, many of the adjectives have been removed. Ask your students to complete the story and make it as interesting as they can by filling in the blanks. It would be a good idea to work on the first two pages orally together with the class by having students suggest the various adjectives that could be used. Then let the students complete the story on their own.

SOURCE: Suzanne Foster, Chaney High School



ELEMENTARY ♦

TO FIND

MY FRIEND



by Robyn Stewart

Illustrated by Michelle Rem

179

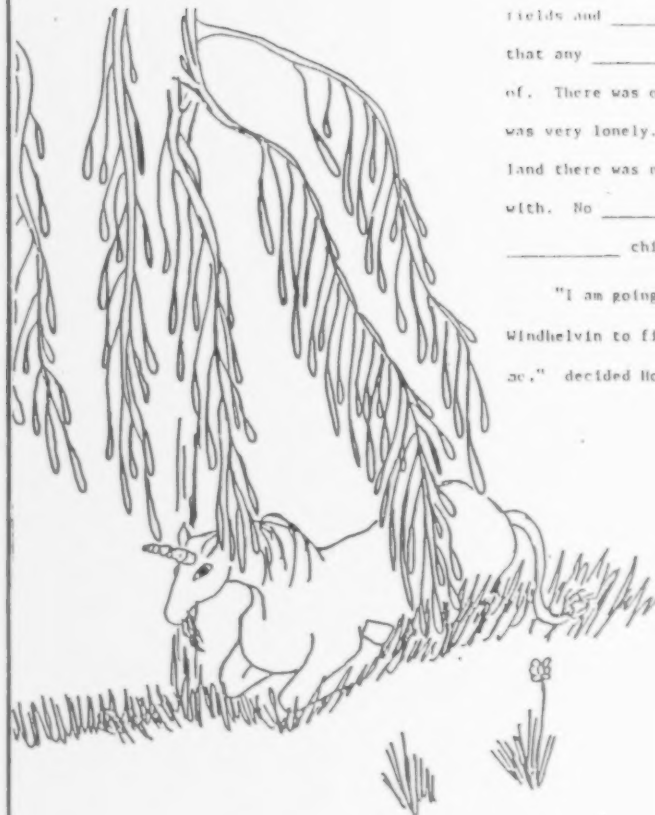
This book is dedicated to all
those who dare to share their
magic by reading and writing.

-R.R.S.

180



Long ago in the _____ land of Windhelvin, there lived a
 _____ unicorn named Hollian. She had a _____
 _____ horn that shone and shimmered in the _____
 sunlight.



_____ fields and _____ waters to play in
 that any _____ unicorn could dream
 of. There was one problem, though. She
 was very lonely. Throughout that _____
 land there was no one for her to play
 with. No _____ unicorns and no
 _____ children.

"I am going to leave _____
 Windhelvin to find someone to play with
 me," decided Hollian one day.

The unicorn Hollian walked
for _____ days before she came to a _____ village called
Chelseamere. Then she spotted a _____ group of children playing
in a schoolyard.



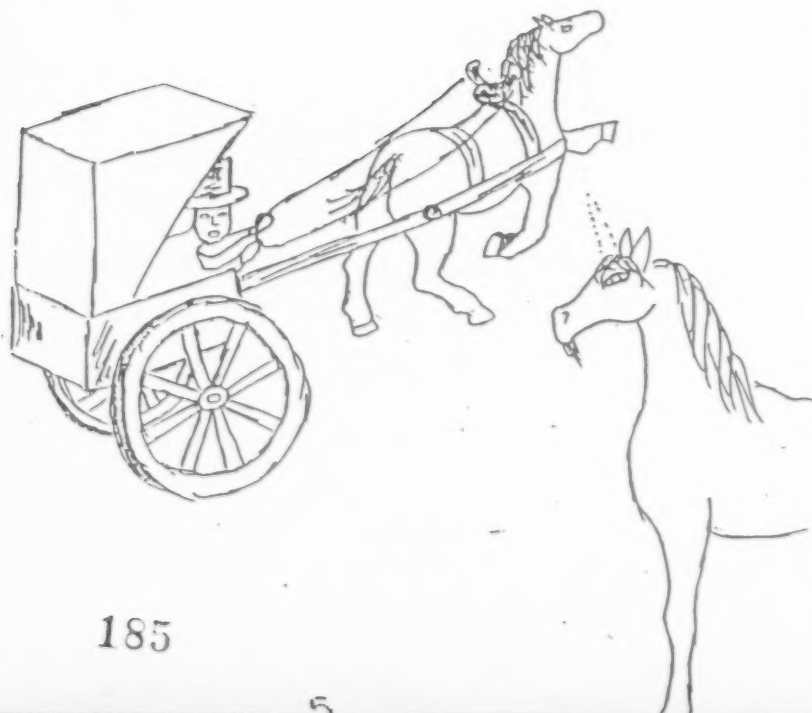
They were playing games that looked so inviting to Hollian that she
totally forgot herself. She didn't notice that she had walked into
the middle of the road until she heard someone screaming at her.



"Get out of the way you stupid horse!" yelled a man as he sped past her.

Hollian was not aware that humans were not able to see her _____ horn, so she didn't understand why the man sounded so cruel.

She bolted toward the schoolyard hoping to find some refuge, but was stopped short when she felt a rope pulled tightly around her neck.



Hollian reared and made such a fuss that the entire village gathered around to see what was happening. What they saw was a horse trying to free itself from the hold of a man. It was the man who had just yelled at her on the road.



"All! I've got you! I'm going to take you with me and make
a _____ work horse of you. You will work in my
_____ fields plowing the soil!"

"No! Please stop!" cried Hollian. But of course no one
could understand her.

"I am not a horse! I am a unicorn. Someone, please
help me!"

Just then a little girl stepped out from the crowd. She had
_____ eyes, and her _____ hair and clothes were
_____ and _____. She was _____ orphan in the town,
and no one cared about her.

The _____ man looked at the _____ girl and the crowd
grew silent.

"Please sir, let me have the horse," she said.



The man continued to look at the little girl, and he finally
threw down the _____ rope.

"Very well then! You may have her. She doesn't look strong enough
to work in my _____ fields anyway!"

Then the man rode off.

The little girl led Hollian back to the edge of the _____ wood.

"I can see your _____ horn, and I know what you are," she told
Hollian. "I heard you call for help. My name is Daphan. What is your
name, and why were you in Chelseamere?"

Hollian was surprised that the girl could understand her. She
was also happy and excited that she had finally found a friend.

"My name is Hollian. I come from Windhelvin. It is a
_____ country, but there is no one for me to play with.
That is why I came here. To find someone to be my friend."

Daphan looked into Hollian's _____ eyes, and with _____ tears in her own said, "Please take me back to your home. I have no parents, no family, no friends. I have no one to care about me. I am as lonely as you."

Hollian agreed and leaned down so that Daphan could climb onto her _____ back.

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"I have never been so happy in all of my life!" cried Daphan.

"Nor have I," agreed Hollian.

The two were never lonely again, and as far as I know, they are still together in _____ Windhelvin.





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TEACHING STYLE

PICNIC FUN

PURPOSE: To introduce students to the use of prepositions and to encourage them to generate their own examples.

PREPARATION: Invite the children on an imaginary picnic. While locating a spot to spread the tablecloth, you notice a rock with ants crawling around it. Draw the rock and ants on the board.

PRESENTATION: Solicit responses from children as to the location of the ants in relation to the rock. Possible responses include:

on the rock	around the rock
under the rock	below the rock
beside the rock	near the rock
above the rock	in the rock

ADDITIONAL

COMMENTS: Instruct the students to turn the phrases into complete thoughts. Ask them to write a story about the ants and their home by the rock.

After the students finish writing, ask selected students to read their stories to the class.

SOURCE: Marilou Slagle, Robinwood Lane Elementary School



ELEMENTARY ♦

TEACHING STYLE

THE PRONOUN GAME

PURPOSE: To help students identify pronouns and how pronouns are used to replace nouns.

PREPARATION: Have each student make twelve 9 x 12 flash cards, writing one of the following on each card: him, our, she, their, us, his, it, they, we, her, he, you. Also have each student write five sentences on five sentence strips, underlining all nouns.

PRESENTATION: Select a student to go to the front of the room with one sentence. Seated students hold up correct "pronoun flash cards" to use in place of underlined nouns. The student holding the sentence strip re-reads the sentence using the pronoun and then calls on another student to go in front of the class. Procedure is repeated.

SOURCE: Carol Ann Filicky, Fifth Street School, Struthers



TEACHING STYLE

THE ADJECTIVE BOX

PURPOSE: To help students use expressive sentences in their writing.

PREPARATION: Give each student a 3 x 6 card. Have them put four unrelated adjectives on the card.

PRESENTATION: Place student cards in a large box. Each student selects a card and must write one sentence using all adjectives listed on the card.

Example: big, purple, shiny, old

Student sentence: The old dog wore a shiny collar with big, purple gems.

Students share their sentences with classmates.

SOURCE: Carol Ann Filicky, Fifth Street School, Struthers



TEACHING STYLE

"LIKE" FUN

PURPOSE: To help students identify and successfully create similes.

PREPARATION: Put the following on the chalkboard: "Leaves fall like pennies." Have students identify the comparison (leaves, pennies). Point out the use of like in the comparison. Put the following on the board: "He is as strong as an ox." Have students identify comparison and use of as. To provide further practice, present the following to students and have them identify the similes:

She is as cold as ice.
The plane soared like an eagle.
Paul is as slow as a turtle.

Reinforce the concept that a simile uses the words as or like to compare two things.

PRESENTATION: Have students use the following to create their own similes:

The sun shone as bright as _____.

The wind is like _____.

Sally is as smart as _____.

Her face is as red as _____.

**ADDITIONAL
COMMENTS:**

Extended lesson:
Students work in pairs
to create their own
similes and illustrate
their creations.

SOURCE:

Carol Ann Filicky
Fifth Street School
Struthers



ELEMENTARY ♦

TEACHING STYLE

PUTTING IT TOGETHER

PURPOSE: To help students combine simple sentences using connecting words.

PREPARATION: Write four simple sentences on the chalkboard.

PRESENTATION: Solicit responses from the students as to how the ideas in the simple sentences can be combined into one, more complex sentence.

Example: I ran quickly.
I ran home.
I came from school.
It was late.

I ran home quickly from school because it was late.

ADDITIONAL

COMMENTS: Write additional simple sentences on the board. Ask students to combine sentences in various ways and share their responses with the class.

SOURCE: Marilou Slagle, Robinwood Lane Elementary School



TEACHING STYLE

DESCRIBE IT TO ME

- PURPOSE:** To increase the use of adjectives in creative writing.
- PREPARATION:** Provide large pictures of objects--nouns--such as apple, tree, house, etc.
- PRESENTATION:** Have children think of as many adjectives as they can to describe each picture. Using those adjectives, they then write sentences that are as descriptive as possible so other students can illustrate the sentences.
- ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:** Make a bulletin board using the large pictures, and attach small cards with adjectives on them.
- SOURCE:** Sally Ocker, Manor School



ELEMENTARY ♦

TEACHING STYLE

OBJECTS AND WORDS

PURPOSE: To help students expand their vocabulary.

PREPARATION: Give each student a holiday cut-out.

PRESENTATION: Discuss the season of autumn. What does it make students think of? What do they see in autumn? What holiday comes in autumn? Ask additional questions to stimulate student discussion. Give students leaf patterns. Students color leaf and write down words that the leaf makes them think of. Hang leaves on large tree on bulletin board.

ADDITIONAL

COMMENTS: Follow same procedure for each holiday.

SOURCE: Carol Ann Filicky, Fifth Street School, Struthers



ELEMENTARY ♦

TEACHING STYLE

POINT OF VIEW

PURPOSE: To acquaint students with point of view and allow them to observe the changes that altering point of view can produce.

PREPARATION: Distribute accompanying worksheet with the writing options on them.

PRESENTATION: Discuss point of view and the changes that altering point of view can cause. Distribute one worksheet to each student, and allow the remainder of the class period for working on the assignment. In class the next day, the students may enjoy reading one of their viewpoint selections and challenging the other students to guess what their point of view was.

SOURCE: Margaret Ford, Reed Middle School, Campbell

MIDDLE SCHOOL ♦♦



WORKSHEET

FOR

POINT OF VIEW

CHOOSE ONE OF THE ASSIGNMENTS BELOW AND WRITE THE ASSIGNMENT FROM EACH POINT OF VIEW.

1. Write about spinach
 - A. as popeye
 - B. as a dietician
 - C. as a 5-year-old who hates green vegetables.
2. Write a conversation in which
 - A. a teenager is explaining to his/her parents how he/she got his/her first speeding ticket
 - B. a teenager is bragging to his/her friends about his/her first speeding ticket.
3. Write a journal entry about the big game
 - A. as a member of the losing team
 - B. as a member of the victorious team
 - C. as a sportswriter for a local newspaper.
4. Write on the topic of year-round school
 - A. as a student
 - B. as a parent
 - C. as a teacher
5. Write about cigarette smoking as
 - A. the president of R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company
 - B. a doctor specializing in the treatment of lung cancer
 - C. a man/woman who has been smoking for twenty years.



TEACHING STYLE

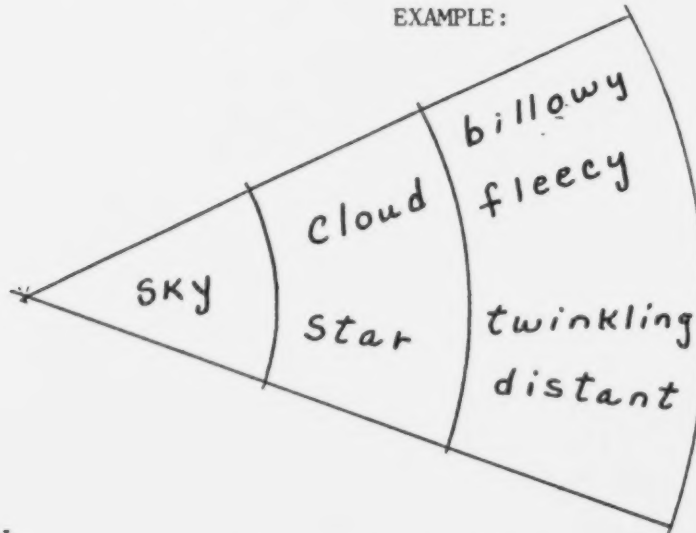
WORD WEB

PURPOSE: To help students develop vocabulary.

PREPARATION: Teacher should have enough copies of the word wheel for everyone in the class. A thermofax transparency of the wheel should be made in advance.

PRESENTATION: Using cue nouns on the inner sections of the circle, students will develop vocabulary in a variety of ways. The second ring of the circle could be used for two nouns related to each cue word. The third ring would include two adjectives to describe each noun in the second ring.

EXAMPLE:



**ADDITIONAL
COMMENTS:**

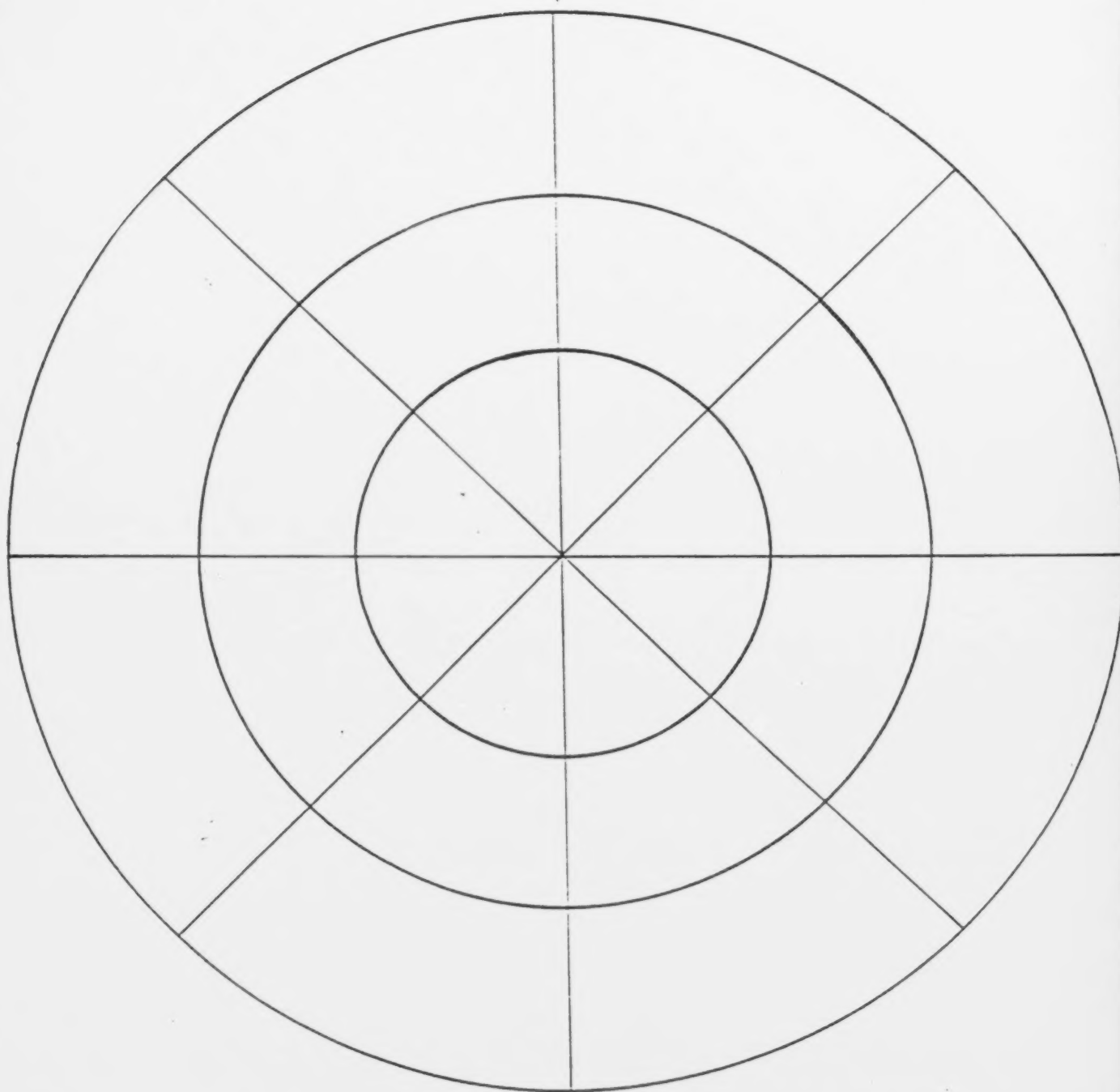
Other variations are possible: (nouns, verbs, adverbs); (nouns, adjectives, similes); (adjectives, synonyms, adjectives).

SOURCE:

Glenda West, Hayes Junior High School
Robert Alleman, Canfield Middle School



WORKSHEET
FOR WORD WEB



TEACHING STYLE

CAP THIS!

PURPOSE: To help students realize that each piece of writing has a unique purpose and audience and to give students practice in this concept by performing short, group-writing activities.

PREPARATION: Prepare written directions to student groups. Assemble a group of identical objects--for example, pencil erasers, paper clips, bottle caps.

PRESENTATION: Discuss the terms purpose and audience, if they have not been introduced earlier, perhaps by giving examples. Divide the class into groups of three to four students. Explain that you will be giving each group a different descriptive writing assignment to complete, using the bottle cap or other object that you will give the group. Give each group a bottle cap and a specific written assignment. Allow students to discuss the topic and then to write for ten to fifteen minutes on the topic. Have each group read its paragraph to the class, and allow the class to guess the purpose and audience.

Written Group Assignments:

1. As an archeologist, you excavate this object 1000 years from now. Write a scientific journal entry about the object you have discovered.
2. Imagine you woke up this morning and discovered you were the object. Describe your day.
3. Make up a myth, fable, or fairy tale for a kindergarten class in which your object plays an important part.
4. Imagine you are the editor of the local paper. Write an editorial describing the dangers that your object presents in the community.
5. Describe your object so completely that your reader could pick it out from a group of similar objects.
6. You are an advertising executive. Design a radio ad for the object you were given. It could be a sales promotion or public service ad (dangers/benefits presented by the object).

SOURCE: Margaret Ford
Reed Middle School
Campbell



TEACHING STYLE

COLORFUL COMBINATIONS

PURPOSE: To help students create complex sentences by combining fragments in a variety of ways.

PREPARATION: Reproduce the worksheet.

PRESENTATION: Give students the worksheet. Have them create sentences about a school by combining fragments from each group (A, B, and C). They may add or delete words as necessary. Once they have written one sentence, have them create two or three others for variety and humor. Do one or two together before the independent work.

SOURCE: Glenda West, Hayes Junior High School

MIDDLE SCHOOL



WORKSHEET
FOR
COLORFUL COMBINATIONS

Group A

Miss Jones walked into
students were cramming
the principal suspended students for throwing
a senior swallowed
the football captain tackled
the music teacher was writing

Group B

fifty spitballs
notes on the board
Mr. Smith, the biology instructor
for an exam
being tardy
the office
six hamburgers

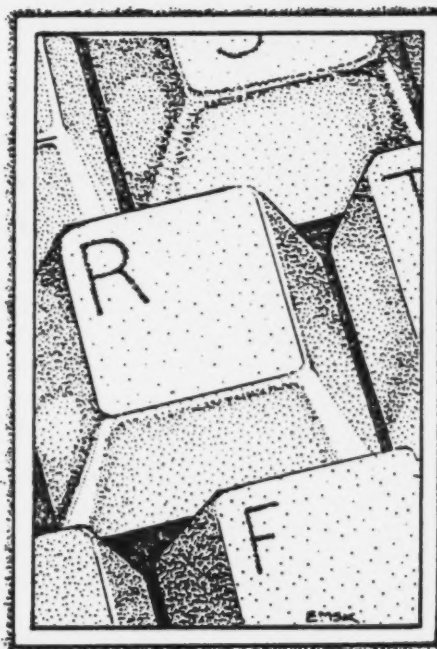
Group C

because he was upset
before class began
when the bell rang
after class was dismissed
during lunch
at practice

TEACHING STYLE

EXTENDED METAPHOR

PURPOSE: To enable the student to develop the style of the extended metaphor and to be able to recognize extraneous comparisons that depart from the form of an extended metaphor. This activity works best with advanced or "honors" students.



PREPARATION: Discuss with the students the idea of extending a comparison over two or three paragraphs of description. A useful example might be Jonathan Edwards' sermon "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," in which the sinner is described as a spider being held over an open flame.

PRESENTATION: Have students write a fairly long paragraph in which they describe taking an examination as if they were attending a funeral, but being sure they never use words directly referring to an examination (e.g., exam, test, questions, teacher, etc.). Other comparisons, such as attending a trial or an execution, are also possible.

Later have the students develop their own extended metaphors and have students exchange papers to see if they can determine what the papers are describing.

Have several papers read aloud, watching for instances where students may have strayed from their plans of comparison.

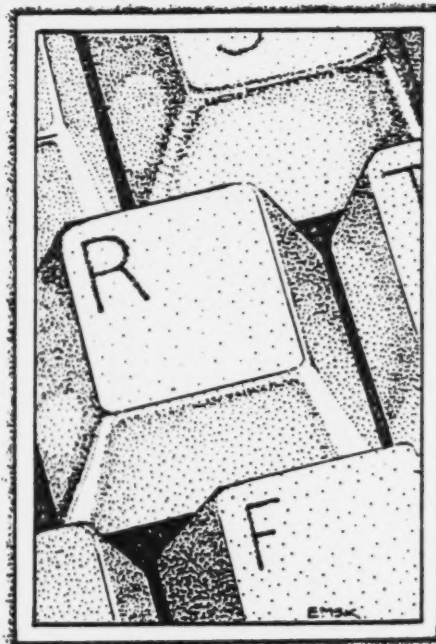
SOURCE: John Mason, Department of English, Western Washington University

TEACHING STYLE

RHETORICAL QUESTIONS

PURPOSE: To enable students to understand the difference between rhetorical questions and genuine questions and to use rhetorical questions effectively in a paragraph.

PREPARATION: Duplicate the poem "Miracles" by Walt Whitman with first and last lines omitted.



PRESENTATION: Distribute the poem, and lead the class in a discussion of Whitman's implied definition of "miracle." Tell the class that the first and last lines, which have been omitted, are in the form of questions. Ask the class to propose questions that might substitute for Whitman's. If necessary, propose as possibilities:

- 1) Can you tell me what a miracle is?
- 2) What is a miracle?

Compare suggestions with Whitman's, trying to get the class to understand that Whitman's questions do not call for the reader to answer; instead, they ask the reader to give attention to the poet's statements.

Next have students work in pairs. Ask each student to write a paragraph of at least four sentences defining an abstract word through the enumeration of examples. Then have students exchange papers and compose rhetorical questions to open and close their partner's paragraph.

SOURCE: John Mason, Department of English, Western Washington University

WORKSHEET

FOR

RHETORICAL QUESTIONS

Miracles

Why, who makes much of a miracle?
As to me I know of nothing else but miracles,
Whether I walk the streets of Manhattan,
Or dart my sight over the roofs of houses toward the sky,
Or wade with naked feet along the beach just in the edge of the
 water,
Or stand under trees in the woods,
Or talk by day with any one I love, or sleep in the bed at night
 with any one I love,
Or sit at table at dinner with the rest,
Or look at strangers opposite me riding in the car,
Or watch honey-bees busy around the hive of a summer forenoon,
Or animals feeding in the fields,
Or birds, or the wonderfulness of insects in the air,
Or the wonderfulness of the sundown, or of stars shining so quiet
 and bright,
Or the exquisite delicate thin curve of the new moon in spring;
These with the rest, one and all, are to me miracles,
The whole referring, yet each distinct and in its place.

To me every hour of the light and dark is a miracle,
Every cubic inch of space is a miracle,
Every square yard of the surface of the earth is spread with the same,
Every foot of the interior swarms with the same.

To me the sea is a continual miracle,
The fishes that swim--the rocks--the motion of the waves--
 the ships with men in them,
What stranger miracles are there?

--Walt Whitman

TEACHING STYLE

SENTENCE SCRAMBLING

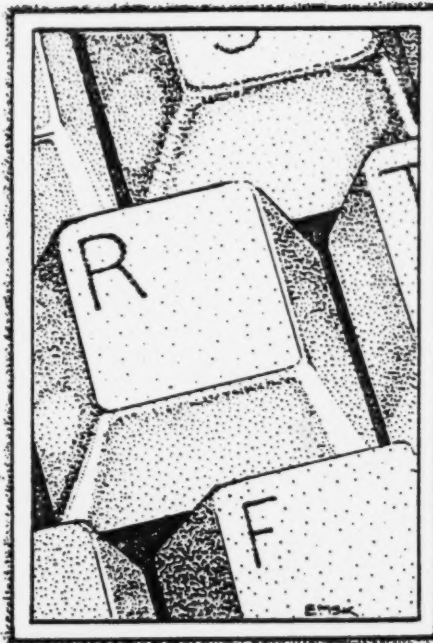
PURPOSE: To help students achieve greater sentence variety by recognizing that sentence parts are "moveable."

PREPARATION: Reproduce the accompanying worksheet, or scramble sentences from any story presently covered in class.

PRESENTATION: At the board or on an overhead, work with students to create at least three sentence variations from a given list of phrases and clauses. Discuss which sentences are most effective and why.

Duplicate worksheet for students. When students have completed the activity, discuss their variations. Have students explain which sentence they believe is most effective and why. Make students aware that by editing their work, which includes revising sentence patterns, they can achieve a better interrelationship of ideas from one sentence part to another and show a greater sophistication in their writing.

SOURCE: Suzanne Foster, Youngstown City Schools. Adapted from Don Killgallon, Sentence Composing 10 (Rochelle Park, N.J.: Hayden Book Company, 1980), 15-18.



WORKSHEET

FOR

SENTENCE SCRAMBLING

DIRECTIONS: Below you will find five scrambled sentences. Unscramble each sentence three times, putting the parts in a different order each time. Decide which of the three variations is most effective, and be able to explain why. (Arranging the parts in different orders may produce changes in emphasis or meaning. You may add or delete a word if necessary, but you may not eliminate one of the sentence parts entirely.)

1. alone
wearing all the clothes she owned
walked
an old, haggard woman
carrying a bulging shopping bag
down the street
2. said something about letting me go on in his place
having seen my performance in Cats
he was very upset
who
when he came to rehearsal
and argued with the director
3. hurrying with stick and suitcase
a well-turned-out derby-crowned man
too innocent
but his glance was too startled
toward the train station
caught her attention
a wisp of hope

--from F. Scott Fitzgerald, A Woman with a Past

4. encircled by facetious youths
toward sunset
where he had been felling timber
and drawn into the group of people by the lake
coming down from the mountain
he had been caught by some strayed revellers
was brewing coffee over a fire
and bright as a blackberry under her spreading hat
where Mattie

--from Edith Wharton, Ethan Frome

WORKSHEET FOR SENTENCE SCRAMBLING- cont'd.

5. came at last to Mars
the people
and feeling their pulses
who once had taken chair cars to California in November
the mummy people
the dried-apricot people
and third-class steamers to Italy in April
these people
and spooning syrups into their dry mouths
and so the dry and crackling people
who spent their time listening to their hearts

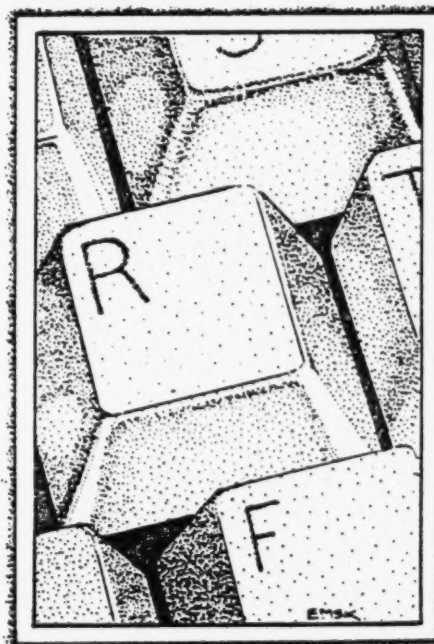
--from Ray Bradbury, The Martian Chronicles

TEACHING STYLE

MAKING COMPARISONS

PURPOSE: To introduce students to the use of metaphors and similes and to encourage them to generate their own examples.

PREPARATION: Define and discuss the definitions of metaphor and simile. Put a few examples on the board for students to refer to while working on the exercise.



PRESENTATION: Duplicate a sheet with phrases such as the following:

funny as
quick as
nervous as
frightened as
thin as

a building is
an elephant is
a snowflake is
a tree is
a graveyard is

Instruct the students to turn the phrases into complete thoughts. Ask them to make up their own metaphors and similes, rather than using well-known sayings (such as quick as a jackrabbit).

After the students finish writing, have each student choose one completed metaphor or simile to read to the class. Discuss the examples in terms of originality, creativity, and appropriateness.

SOURCE: Joan Schmitzer, Poland High School

TEACHING STYLE

PARALLEL PRACTICE

PURPOSE: To help the students generate parallel sentences.

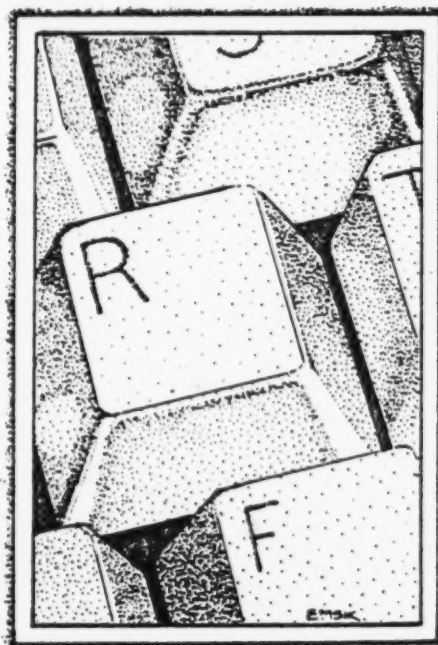
PREPARATION: Discuss the parallel sentence, and give the students a few examples. Examples might include:

1. School is supposed to help young people mature, to teach them social responsibility, and to prepare them to enter the world.

2. We chased the cat into the alley, around a pile of garbage, in between some parked cars, and down the street, but it got away.

PRESENTATION: Duplicate the worksheet, and have the students write their own parallel sentences.

SOURCE: Joan Schmitzer, Poland High School



WORKSHEET
FOR
PARALLEL PRACTICE

1. Make a list of five things you hope to accomplish during your high school career. Start each item with the word "to."

Example: to make good friends

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

With this list, write a complete sentence using parallel construction.

2. List three places a high school student might go that would produce an exciting weekend.

Example: "going to the prom"

1.

2.

3.

With this list, write a complete sentence using parallel construction.

WORKSHEET FOR PARALLEL PRACTICE- cont'd.

3. List three things a high school student might do to get an "A" in English class. Start each item with an "ing" verbal followed by an adverb.

Example: "reading carefully"

1.

2.

3.

With this list, write a complete sentence using parallel constructions.

4. Look around the room and choose three people in your class. Write their name plus a clause beginning with the word "who" that might describe them.

Example: Paul, who is always making jokes, . . .

1.

2.

3.

Beginning with these three names and clauses, write a complete sentence using parallel construction.

5. List three things that might make you happy. Begin with the words "If I had."

Example: "If I had a new car,"

1.

2.

3.

With this list, write a complete sentence using parallel construction.

TEACHING STYLE

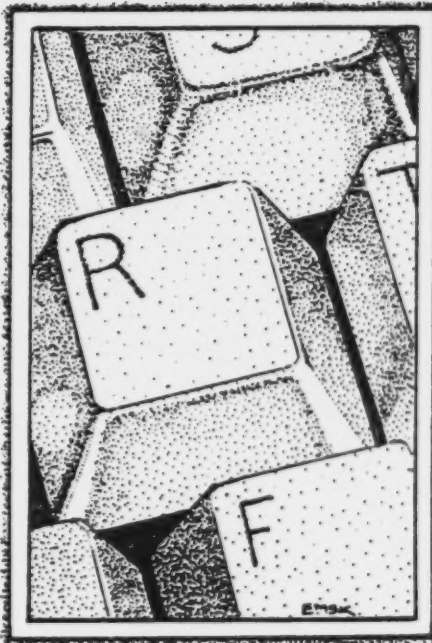
SWITCHING POINT OF VIEW

PURPOSE: To enable students to maintain a consistent point of view in a brief essay.

PREPARATION: Assign as homework an autobiographical sketch of no more than 250 words.

PRESENTATION: In class, have students rewrite their own autobiographical sketches into the third person. Then have each student give the third-person account to a partner, who will rewrite it into the first person. The two first-person versions can then be compared.

SOURCE: John Mason, Department of English, Western Washington University



◆ HIGH SCHOOL ◆

TEACHING STYLE

VOCABULARY EXTENDER

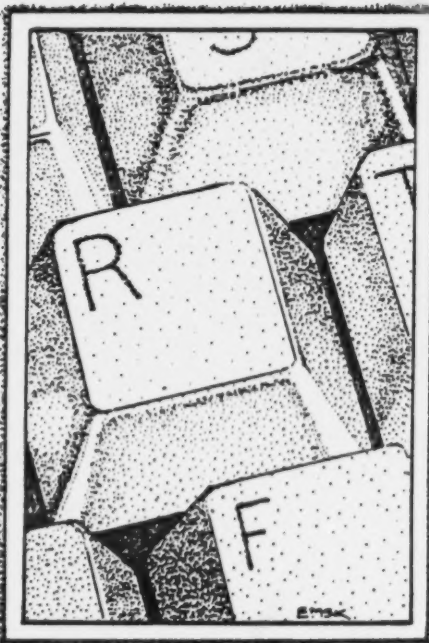
PURPOSE: To help students use more concrete and expressive vocabulary.

PREPARATION: Prepare a collection of simple sentences with colorless verbs and no adjectives/modifiers for nouns and verbs.

PRESENTATION: Write a basic, simple sentence on the board. Example: "A person was in the chair." Ask the class to supply as many variations for the subject as possible. These should be more specific nouns such as "grandmother," "child," or "stranger." Next have students imagine how their subject would "be" in this chair; e.g., "slouched," "wiggled," or "slumped." Then have students direct their attention to the word "chair" and suggest ways of making the image of the chair more vivid. This could be accomplished by adding adjectives, adverbs, or phrases. At this point one could return to the subject and/or verb for further extension by adding additional modifiers.

Students will now use one of their newly constructed statements as the "topic" sentence for a short essay or story about the individual in the chair. The students should continue to work independently, using descriptive modifiers as they write, keeping in mind the image set forth in their opening sentence.

SOURCE: Deborah Smith, East High School. Adapted from Writing Exercises from Exercise Exchange, ed. Littleton Long (Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English, 1976), 26.

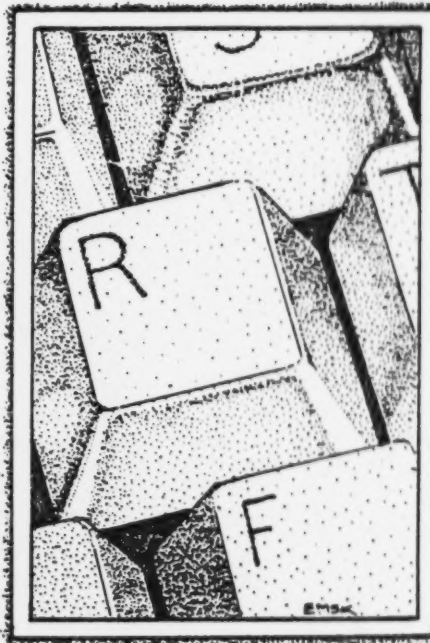


TEACHING STYLE

CLICHE CUTTING

PURPOSE: To help students recognize clichés and trite expressions so that they can edit them out of their own writing.

PREPARATION: Have a poster board available to list students' responses. Poster board should have the heading "CLICHE BUSTERS" at the top. It would be effective to include the symbol that has come to mean "not permitted" or "refrain from doing" at the bottom of the poster.



PRESENTATION: List the following sentences on the board: "We had a great time at the rock concert. It was really awesome. We agreed that we had a lot of fun. The lead singer was bad!" Ask students to decide the true meaning of phrases like "a great time," "really awesome," "a lot of fun," and "bad." Discuss the trite and vague meanings of phrases and words used in the example on the board. You might want to add to the list other clichés and trite phrases and words. Students should arrive at the conclusion that words like "gross," "neat," "nice," and "interesting" are words that lack clear meaning and detract from their writing. Have students brainstorm a list of trite, overused words and clichés. List all of the students' responses on the poster board, and place it on a conspicuous classroom wall. Be sure to have the poster displayed as students work on writing assignments.

SOURCE: Dante Zambrini, Canfield High School. Adapted from Robert J. Leonard and Peter H. deBeer, A Survival Kit for Teachers of Composition (West Hyak, N.Y.: Center for Applied Research in Education, 1982), 150.

Bibliography

Part I

Extensive bibliography and a more detailed review of research on style can be found in Edward P. J. Corbett's "Approaches to the Study of Style," in Teaching Composition: 10 Bibliographical Essays, ed. Gary Tate (Fort Worth: Texas Christian Univ. Press, 1976), 73-109. Corbett's essay contains references to high school teaching.

Additional background or theory-based works include the following:

Annas, Pamela J. "Style as Politics: A Feminist Approach to the Teaching of Writing." College English 47 (1985): 360-71.

Bawer, Bruce. The Contemporary Stylist. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1987.

Chapter 5, "Stylistics," offers examples and generalizations that may be useful for teachers of writing who seek to define style and for secondary students interested in investigating the components of style.

Dillard, Jill. "Reading and Writing Brings First-Class Learning." Ohio Reading Teacher 21.2 (1986): 11-14.

Argues that writing should be incorporated in reading programs for very young readers.

Donovan, Timothy R., and Ben W. McClelland, eds. Eight Approaches to Teaching Composition. Urbana, Ill.: NCTE, 1980.

In particular, see Paul A. Eschholz's "The Prose Models Approach: Using Products in the Process," pp. 21-36, and Kenneth Dowst's "The Epistemic Approach: Writing, Knowing, and Learning," pp. 65-85.

Geller, Linda Gibson. Wordplay and Language Learning for Children. Urbana, Ill.: NCTE, 1985.

Elementary and junior high school teachers will find a discussion of word play as it relates to figurative language (metaphor, rhyme, etc.).

Hake, Rosemary L., and Joseph M. Williams. "Style and Its Consequences: Do As I Do, Not As I Say." College English 43 (1981): 443-51.

Presents evidence that while teachers urge students to write clearly and directly, they reward students for verbosity and complexity.

Hashimoto, I. "Voice as Juice: Some Reservations about Evangelic Composition." College Composition and Communication 38 (1987): 70-80.

Somehow convinced that a distinctive "voice" actually "saves" students, we encourage emotional voices and thus may thwart intellectual endeavor, "undermin[ing] the importance of teaching composition at all on the college level."

Hunt, Kellogg N. "Grammatical Structures Written at Three Grade Levels [Grades 4, 8, and 12]." NCTE Research Report No. 3. Urbana, Ill.: NCTE, 1965.

A quantitative study with emphasis on clause and sentence length, subordination ratio, and kinds of subordinate clauses.

Labov, Walter. "Language Development Kindergarten through Grade Twelve." NCTE Research Report No. 18. Urbana, Ill.: NCTE, 1976.

Mayher, John S., Nancy B. Lester, and Gordon M. Pradl. "Writing from a Developmental Perspective." Chp. 4 in Learning to Write/Writing to Learn. Upper Montclair, N.J.: Boynton/Cook, 1983, 49-77.

Argues the importance of encouraging fluency and imagination, rather than "correctness," in young, developing writers.

Mandell, Barrett J. "Losing One's Mind: Learning to Write and Edit." College Composition and Communication 29 (1978): 362-68.

Mellon, John C. Transformational Sentence-Combining. Urbana, Ill.: NCTE, 1969.

Report of an experiment with 250 seventh graders. Argues that practice in transformational sentence combining increases syntactic fluency.

- Milic, Louis T. "Against the Typology of Styles." Rhetoric: Theories for Application. Ed. Robert M. Gorrell. Urbana, Ill.: NCTE, 1967. 66-74.
- Murray, Donald M. "Internal Revision: A Process of Discovery." Research on Composing: Points of Departure. Ed. Charles Cooper and Lee Odell. Urbana, Ill.: NCTE, 1978. 85-103.
- Perl, Sondra. "Understanding Composing." The Writer's Mind: Writing as a Mode of Thinking. Ed. Janice N. Hays et al. Urbana, Ill.: NCTE, 1983. 43-51.
- Pringle, Jan. "Why Teach Style? A Review-Essay." College Composition and Communication 34 (1983): 91-97.
- Walpole, Jane R. "Style as Option." College Composition and Communication 31 (1980): 205-12.

Part II

The following selected sources emphasize the practical problems faced by teachers at various levels. Omitted from the list are purely theoretical discussions of style (including debates on whether or not style reflects a writer's choice or the fulfillment of linguistic necessity) and explanations of various approaches to stylistic analyses of texts. E, JrH, and HS indicate the grade levels that may be most appropriate, but exercises in most of the texts may be adapted for other levels.

- Albert, Burt. "Burt Albert's Complete Guide to Writing." Instructor Feb. 1982: 72-79. (E)

Activities guide students through the writing process. Lesson eight shows how descriptive adjectives stimulate writing.

- Christensen, Francis. "A Generative Rhetoric of the Sentence." College Composition and Communication 16 (1963): 155-61; and "A Generative Rhetoric of the Paragraph." College Composition and Communication 16 (1965): 144-56. (HS)

Frequently reprinted and included, with some revisions, in Christensen's Notes toward a New Rhetoric (New York: Harper & Row, 1967). Argues that the "cumulative" structure of both sentences and paragraphs works to generate ideas.

Cooper, Charles R. "An Outline for Writing Sentence-Combining Problems." The Writing Teacher's Sourcebook. Ed. Gary Tate and Edward P. J. Corbett. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1981. 368-78. (E, JrH)

Corbett, Edward P. J. Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student. 2nd ed. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1971. (HS)

Chapter 4 offers imitative exercises.

Corbin, Richard. The Teaching of Writing in Our Schools. New York: Macmillan, 1966. (E, JrH, HS)

Describes the nature of the writing act--how and when children learn to write--and the methods used in schools to develop writing ability. Chapters 7 and 8 treat style and evaluation.

D'Angelo, Frank. "Imitation and the Teaching of Style." Forum: Essays on Theory and Practice. Ed. Patricia L. Stock. Upper Montclair, NJ: Boynton/Cook, 1983. 173-88. (HS)

Discusses methods and rationale for having students perform a stylistic analysis of a passage of writing and then an imitation.

Eastman, Richard M. Style: Writing and Reading as the Discovery of Outlook. 3rd ed. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1984. (HS+)

Based on the thesis that style is not merely a dress for writing but also the basis by which a writer comes to know his or her subject, this text offers a series of increasingly sophisticated exercises in style and rhetoric. Largely too advanced even for high school, perhaps, but the source of many fine classroom activities that could be adapted.

Geier, Thomas R. "Simile Sets to Foster Creative Writing." English Language Arts Bulletin 23.1 (1982): 47-49. (JrH, HS)

A series of progressively more difficult games using similes and metrics.

Gibson, Walker. "An Exercise in Prose Style." Rhetoric: Theories for Application. Ed. Robert M. Gorrell.

Urbana, Ill.: NCTE, 1967. 99-106. (HS)

Describes in-class activity to help students experiment with diction and sentence structure to effect changes in voice.

Graves, Richard L. "A Primer for Teaching Style." College Composition and Communication 25 (1974): 186-90. (HS)

Discusses using visual aids to help students recognize and imitate various rhetorical figures.

Grubaugh, Steven. "Spoken Words: Quality Exposure to Vocabulary Concepts." English Journal 74.1 (1985): 64-67. (JrH, HS)

Describes how to use word stories and anecdotes to teach vocabulary.

McCrimmon, James M. Writing with a Purpose. 8th ed. Boston, Mass.: Houghton Mifflin, 1984. (HS)

Presents various writers' styles for analysis. Offers informative practical advice about style in six steps as well as six guidelines for revising one's style.

O'Hare, Frank. Sentence Combining: Improving Student Writing without Formal Grammar. Urbana, Ill.: NCTE, 1973. (JrH, HS)

A sentence-combining methodology that moves students through progressively more difficult steps without relying on instruction in formal grammar. Includes sample lessons and exercises.

Petty, Walter T., and Mary E. Bowen. Slithery Snakes and Other Aids to Children's Writing. New York: Meredith, 1967. (E)

Based on the conviction that children can and should be taught many of the aspects of creative writing previously reserved for adults preparing to become professional writers.

Petty, Walter T., Dorothy C. Petty, and Marjorie F. Becking. Experiences in Language Tools and Techniques for Language Arts Methods. Boston, Mass.: Allyn and Bacon, 1973. (E, JrH)

Chapter 4 contains writing activities especially helpful for style.

Rank, Hugh. "A Few Good Words for Cliches." English Journal 73.5 (1984): 45-47. (JrH, HS)

Classifies cliches and discusses instances in which they can be used legitimately.

Strong, William. Sentence Combining: A Composing Book. New York: Random House, 1973. (JrH, HS)

The instructor's manual offers a history of sentence-combining research and suggestions for classroom use.

Tufte, Virginia. Grammar as Style. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971. (HS)

A taxonomy of sentence types with examples.

Verille, Sister Jacqueline R. Plus Four. Urbana, Ill.: NCTE, 1983. (E)

Uses games to encourage intermediate elementary students to expand sentences.

Walpole, Jane R. "Style as Option." College Composition and Communication 31 (1980): 205-12. (JrH, HS)

Argues that for classroom purposes, style should be defined as the writer's choice among various options in language and offers some suggestions for teaching those options.

Weathers, Winston. "Teaching Style: A Possible Anatomy." The Writing Teacher's Sourcebook. Ed. Gary Tate and Edward P. J. Corbett. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1981. 325-32. (E, JrH, HS)

Discusses three tasks necessary in teaching style: convincing students of the importance of style, reducing it to teachable units, and making it believable by having teachers of writing write in the presence of their students. Suggests some activities.

Whissen, Thomas. A Way with Words: A Guide for Writers. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1982. (HS)

Offers examples of prose in contemporary and traditional styles for analysis and imitation as well as exercises

in word usage, sentence structure and rhythm, and paragraph development.

Williams, Joseph M. Style: Ten Lessons in Clarity and Grace. 2nd ed. Glenview, Ill.: Scott, Foresman, 1985. (HS)

Admittedly a strongly prescriptive set of lessons on the development of a "clear" style.

Writing! General Learning Corporation, 3500 Western Avenue, Highland Park, Illinois 60635. Published monthly September through May. (E, JrH, HS)

An excellent classroom periodical for upper elementary through high school that contains articles and exercises on all elements of writing, along with interviews with contemporary authors.

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THE
TRAIT
OF

Presentation

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THE TRAIT OF PRESENTATION

The Trait of Presentation: What Is It and What Does Research Say About It?

The trait of presentation is, quite purposefully, the last of the traits to be discussed here. Presentation skills are primarily skills in editing a text to fit acceptable usage standards. When a piece of writing has reached the stage at which it is ready to be "published"--that is, made public--the writer's attention should focus on preparing the final text to meet the expectations of their readers in such matters as punctuation, spelling, mechanics, and usage. Thus, it is only after writers have determined their purpose in writing, settled on a workable direction or organizational pattern for their ideas, and established their own distinctive styles through effective sentences and vocabulary choices that their texts are ready for "presentation" to their readers.

Presentation skills are usually taught in English classrooms as "grammar," but much of what is taught would more properly be labeled matters of "currently acceptable usage." As teachers of writing we should be aware of the distinctions between "grammar" and "usage" to understand more fully what it is we teach when we teach presentation skills. The term "grammar" has more than one meaning. The first refers to the underlying structure of the language, the internalized and unconscious set of rules known to all speakers of the language, and learned by being exposed to other speakers of the language. All users of language know its grammar, or they would not be able to understand and make themselves understood. Children entering school already know their grammar in this sense. A second use of the term "grammar" indicates a written description of the underlying structure of the language. Grammatical descriptions may vary in their approaches--there are, for example, transformational, structural, traditional, and Latin-based descriptions--but they all have the same purpose: to describe how English "works." In order to describe how words function in sentences, we can, if we follow the traditional descriptions, assign them to "parts of speech" and label them "subjects," "predicates," "modifiers."

The study of the underlying structure of the language by learning the various descriptions of that language is

important for its own sake, but it is not particularly usable as a way of learning to write. There are, of course, certain advantages to having students know how English works: they can gain insight into the marvels of language; they can increase their awareness of English as a language different from other languages; they can see and study how English has changed in its structure over the centuries--and they can develop a common vocabulary with which to talk about language. But knowledge of grammatical descriptions and terms will not necessarily transfer into writing skill. Many students--as research and observation have shown--can diagram set sentences and still not be able to produce well-formed sentences of their own. Knowledge about complex structures like gerund phrases, along with the ability to identify and name them in an exercise book, will not guarantee that students can use complex structures in their own writing.

"Usage" is the study of the conventions or established rules of how educated people use language currently. Generally, we spend the majority of class time perusing the study of accepted usages or conventions in writing in order to help student writers learn to present their ideas clearly, effectively, and in socially acceptable form. Students should know, for example, that double negatives, as in "He don't have no money," or such verb forms as "I seen" are unconventional and may be perceived as "wrong" by educated people. When we talk about the ability of writers to handle presentation skills, we are talking about their control of the broad conventions or rules of language, conventions not only of appropriate grammatical form, but also of spelling and punctuation.

Presentation skills should be taught as part of the final stage of the writing process. After generating ideas, drafting, and revising, writers are ready to edit their texts. They should be encouraged to delay editing until drafts are fairly complete. A premature focus on presentation skills may interfere with the writing process, inhibiting writers--especially beginning and basic writers--from freely exploring their ideas, experimenting with structures and forms, and engaging in the discovery that writing affords. Undue concern with presentation skills during the beginning stages of writing can come between writers and their ideas; when the text is ready for publishing, however, inadequate attention to presentation skills can create a barrier between the readers and their understanding of the text. The success of any piece of writing depends in large part on the writer's skill and care in preparing and editing the final version of the work. Misleading or ambiguous sentences, punctuation that inhibits

instead of clarifying ideas, distracting misspelling or imprecise word use may interfere with the readers' comprehension of what the writers have tried to say, and will surely dampen the readers' interest.

Poor presentation skills can also give the impression that writers are neither interested in nor responsive to the needs and expectations of their readers--a situation that most certainly is not conducive to communication. It is this dimension of presentation skills--the social demands of writing--that teachers cannot ignore, since society demands and expects writers to adhere to the conventions established by the educated users of the language. But the social requirements should always be kept in proper perspective, and teachers should remember that not all student writing need be published, and, thus, some written work may never get to the presentation stage. Writers are more receptive to learning the skills of careful editing when they have a sense of pride in their work. Encouragement and positive feedback about what is good in their writing and how it might be made even better are valuable incentives to editing. Writers who have been shown how to edit and taught why it is important that final texts are presented in acceptable and readable form have a chance to become confident writers, in control of the conventions of the written language.

On September 22, 1881, a writer in the Journal of Education stated the following:

This learning of definitions, this parsing and analysing have no result commensurate with the time and pains expended. Many of our best teachers have seen this for years; have put it in print; have proved it at Teacher's institutes. Why, then, do we keep on in the same ruts?

Over one hundred years later we are still passionately embroiled in this same issue. In the minds of the public, the Trait of Presentation is a seeming absolute--an accounting of correctness and error. As professionals, we know that we are not merely accountants who tally the errors of our students; we are writers ourselves, skilled in analyzing error and experienced in presenting our own ideas for publication--even if only to our classes. For this reason, research in presentation is of great interest to us.

The following are a few of the most important ideas that research has supported:

1. The correlation between the ability to describe a sentence (to diagram its structure, to name its parts, to identify its constituents, and the like) and the ability to compose sentences is very low (Booris 1917; reprinted Sherwin 1969).

2. Research has shown that time spent in drill on grammatical terminology, in parsing sentences, or workbook correction drills is not just wasted, but counterproductive, since it deprives students of time in class that could be spent engaged in the writing process itself (Braddock 1963).

3. Editing should not be taught through error-based instructions or with the aid of error-based examples. Research tends to blame error-oriented pedagogy for much of the writing anxiety and apprehension that marks insecure or basic writers (Rose 1983; Smith 1984).

4. Because textbooks still stress such outdated methods as copying and correcting practice sets of usage errors, much time in elementary school is being spent in copying rather than in actual composing (Bridge, Hiebert 1985).

5. Grammar and usage are best taught inductively, not as the application of a "rule" to writing, but through inquiry and discovery on the part of the writer. The work done by Flower and Hayes (1980, 1981) demonstrates how much writers view writing as a cognitive activity, a "problem-solving" engagement.

6. Good writers often effectively break those same rules that we drill into students (Schuster 1985).

7. Instruction in mechanics is most effectively done when students are rewriting and revising, in response to individual needs; previous teaching of grammatical terminology has not been found necessary for students to engage in editing activities (Weaver 1979).

How Does the Trait of Presentation Develop in Student Writing?

It is important for teachers to understand how the trait of presentation develops in students' writing. This development occurs over a long period of time and cannot be rushed. A student can be at the beginning, intermediate, or advanced stage in any grade. The stage is defined by the writer's level of competency rather than strictly by grade

level. However, in grades K-2, teachers cannot expect most students to be competent in any of the areas of presentation, since this skill just begins to develop around third grade. The very young writer will need help correcting spelling, usage, and mechanics. This should be done only with selected pieces of writing, not with every paper the child writes. For the young student in K-2, it is only necessary to attend to presentation skills when the writer's work is going to be displayed on a bulletin board or shared in some similar way. For a teacher to try and "correct" all the mechanical errors and spelling mistakes in every paper a young student writes is not only unnecessary but also impossible. Likewise, teachers of writers at all levels must understand the development of this trait so that they know when a "mistake" is not a cause for concern but simply evidence of the developmental level of the writer.

The following outline indicates the stages at which specific presentation skills may be expected to develop. Because there is a great deal of similarity in the writing of any beginning, intermediate, or advanced writer, the stages are not defined by grade level. Teachers of beginning writers from the elementary to the secondary level will see the same developmental pattern in presentation skills. Following this outline, a more complete discussion of this development, including student writing samples, is provided.

THE BEGINNING STAGE of the development of the trait of presentation is marked by the writer's attention to the following:

1. Spelling
2. End punctuation and initial capitalization of simple sentences
3. Correct use of present and past tense
4. Simple subject/verb agreement
5. Use of simple modifiers

THE INTERMEDIATE STAGE includes competency in those elements listed in the beginning stage and a focus of the writer's attention to the following:

1. Capitalization
2. Abbreviation
3. Comma punctuation relevant to coordination
4. Punctuation (even if incorrect) relevant to subordination
5. Awareness of homonym differences
6. Verb tenses properly used
7. Subject/verb agreement with interrupters

THE ADVANCED STAGE includes competency in all areas mentioned in the earlier stages and adds a degree of sophistication in their use. Certain presentation skills (e.g., correct pronoun cases, parallel structures, and the mastery of conjunctive adverbs) seem to be tied to cognitive maturation, and students cannot be expected to show proficiency in those skills until at least late senior high.

THE BEGINNING STAGE

One of the earliest traits of presentation to be developed is spelling. At the Beginning stage, writers are becoming competent with spelling. They may make errors, especially on the more difficult words, but these errors do not interfere with the reading of the paper. Words may be spelled phonetically, or homonyms may be confused as in the following examples:

1. The branches that I usealy go to
have righting on it.
2. Their is nobody around their.

If teachers see this type of mistake in a beginning writer's work, they should not be concerned. These mistakes are natural at this level.

Another trait of presentation being developed at this Beginning stage is mechanics. At this stage of development, end punctuation and capitalization of simple sentences are used fairly consistently. However, the teacher may find a student who exhibits the correct use of capitals and end punctuation in part of a paper and does not use it correctly in another part of the same paper as shown in the following example.

It is quiet it is a nice place to go
when I want to study my subjecks. When I
do my homework I like to whach the birds
and the animals.

This shows that an awareness of mechanics is developing normally.

The third part of the trait of presentation is usage. In the Beginning stage of development, most writers show some competency in subject/verb agreement in simple sentences. Writers at this level can be expected to use the present and past tenses of verbs correctly most of the time. Writers also begin to use simple modifiers and some correct pronoun reference at this stage of development. An example of

beginning development of usage is shown in the following:

Some of the branches have righting on it
because my sister goes on the garage roof
and she puts wrighting on it so she knows
what branches to step on.

Subject/verb agreement is correct in this example. However, there are both correct and incorrect pronoun usages. The more complex pronoun usage is incorrect (some . . . it), while the simpler (sister . . . she) is used correctly.

Also at the Beginning stage, teachers should be aware that they may encounter students whose dialects do not conform to standard English. This should not be confused with a lag in development at this stage. However, as students progress to the Intermediate and Advanced stages, their use of dialect in written work will decrease as they become more aware of correct, acceptable usage of standard English.

Another point to mention at the Beginning stage is that many beginning writers will write beyond their level of mechanics mastery. This is natural since young writers cannot master all of the rules and mechanics quickly or at once. An example of such work follows:

The place that makes me relax most
is the park down the street from my home
The reason why I find this relaxing -
simply because this park is on the shore
of a lake and listening to the quiet,
calm sound of the waves makes me forget
all my problems and troubles.

THE INTERMEDIATE STAGE

In the Intermediate stage all traits from the Beginning stage continue to be developed and refined. Spelling is basically correct and does not interfere with the reader's understanding of the paper. Writers at this level are using dictionaries to look up words whose spelling and definitions they are unsure of. Final drafts are relatively free of spelling errors.

Writers at this level are aware of homonym usage. While usually correct, homonyms can be a minor problem for some writers. These usually include its--it's, to--two--two, there--their--they're, your--you're--many of which are contractions. The following example shows an often made mistake at the Intermediate stage of development.

If I get to hot I just hike to the waterfall . . .

At the Intermediate stage of presentation, mechanics should include punctuation skills which are developed to include comma usage relative to coordination and subordination, and listing in a series. Capitalization and use of abbreviations should be correct most of the time. An example of Intermediate stage mechanics is as follows:

The things I do to relax is, go to my room, watch television, listen to the radio, read a book, sleep or lay on the floor or bed and just think.

While this sentence is not completely correct, it does show that the writer is aware of the use of commas in a series. This writer's skills in mechanics are developing normally. In the following example, although some of the parallelism is faulty, the writer has successfully punctuated items in a series. This is normal for this stage of development.

My room is a small, but roomy, quiet, and in the day I can open the curtains and blinds and let in some sunlight. When I open the blinds I can feel the golden rays of sunlight come through the glass of the window and lay upon me. Then I lay on the carpeted floor, look out the window, and let my mind drift off to a beautiful and exciting day dream.

The usage skills of Intermediate writers are also more refined than at the Beginning stage. Verb usage is developing to include the use of the future tense along with the present and past tenses. At this level, simple subject/verb agreement is correct all of the time. Furthermore, intermediate writers are starting to develop subject/verb agreement even with interrupters between the subject and verb as shown in this example:

The only sounds you hear are the rippling waters of the creek and the birds chirping.

However, teachers of writers at the Intermediate stage still encounter students whose subject/verb agreement with interrupters is incorrect, as in this example:

The things I do to relax is, go to my room . . .

This is normal at this stage of development.

Intermediate stage writers are also beginning to use the perfect and progressive tenses. Writers at this level of development use correct pronoun reference and more explicit modifiers as in the following student examples:

1. . . . hot, muggy day
2. . . . pestering brothers and sisters.

THE ADVANCED STAGE

The final stage of the writer's development is the Advanced stage. At this stage, writers' presentation skills are well developed and refined with an added degree of sophistication.

Spelling is almost always correct, as is homonym usage. The mechanics of punctuation, capitalization, etc., are correct with few errors. Usage is developed to the level of using the perfect and progressive tenses correctly. In other words, Advanced writers are competent in the use of the presentation skills of spelling, mechanics, and usage with few or no mistakes. These writers are working toward more sophisticated sentence structure and advanced vocabulary. An example of an Advanced writer's work follows:

She devoured book after book on anything and every- thing remotely related to the Kennedys. The charm and personality of a man dead for twenty years reached out from the grave and spun a web of entrancement around her. She scoured attics, garage sales, and flea markets for old newspapers, magazines, campaign buttons, and books. When his children and other relatives appeared anywhere in print, she would get out her scissors and clip away. Her pictures of John F. Kennedy and his family at Hyannis Port are still very much alive, and convey the spirit and warmth of a great man. Looking at them, one can hardly imagine him as anything but alive and active, playing touch football on the beach.

Teachers need to remember that students' mastery of presentational skills does not always progress smoothly. In fact, as students attempt more complex rhetorical forms, they

are likely to seem to regress in their presentational skills. For example, students may write relatively error-free narratives and then write descriptions and arguments cluttered with errors. This is entirely natural, and teachers should not be surprised or overly concerned. Teachers can remember that when they chastise students for "regressing," they are likely to discourage students from attempting more mature and demanding rhetorical forms.

Suggestions for Teaching Presentation Skills

Presentation skills can be the most problematic of the traits to teach. Research has repeatedly shown that teaching formal grammar and working through drills and exercises can have no positive effect on improving presentation skills, and that beginning and basic writers are often inhibited in their writing by the fear that they do not know the "rules." Yet presentation skills are too often the primary trait upon which evaluations of students' writing are made, regardless of the quality of the other traits. The identification of error has, at times, become the sole measure for judging a piece of writing, and frequently in handbook and workbook exercises, error-identification serves as the means for teaching presentation skills. This error-oriented approach can only reinforce the beginning and basic writers' anxieties about their writing abilities and interfere with their engagement in the writing process.

Teachers who want to encourage writers to sharpen their presentation skills will find the following guidelines useful:

1. Teachers should try not to find errors but to find patterns of error in papers in order to help writers learn to edit effectively. A paper with eighteen errors may in reality have only three errors, each appearing six times. It is only efficient to look "behind" repeated or related errors and try to clarify the source of the problem for the student.

2. Teachers should establish priorities in teaching editing skills. That is, some errors or types of errors are more important or noticeable, more inhibiting to efficient reading, or even more "unacceptable" than others. Comma splices, for example, that blur sentence boundaries and lead to confusion should be tended to before students worry about whether or not to use a comma after an introductory phrase of fewer than five words. (The latter, of course, is a "rule" that basic writers might more likely be concerned with.)

3. Although accomplished writers may draft and revise or edit simultaneously, basic writers, unsure of the conventions, often get so concerned about "correctness" that they either lose track of what they are saying or stop trying altogether. Teachers who insist on "correctness" of preliminary drafts or who "correct" the surface features of early drafts contribute to the anxiety of basic writers and stifle the drafting-revising process.

4. Editing problems are often very idiosyncratic and therefore are best treated individually or in conference. Class time spent going over sentence punctuation when only three of twenty-five students have problems in that area is wasted time. However, generally shared problems may warrant class time and attention.

5. Students should learn how to use the writer's tools for editing--good handbooks of currently acceptable usage and up-to-date dictionaries. They will need instruction in using these guides, and incentive to turn to them on their own.

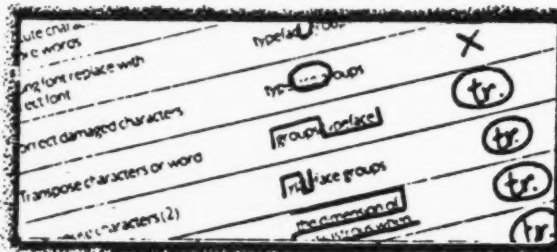
6. Writers will become more aware of the need for good presentation skills when they know their work will actually be "published." A class newsletter, a literary journal, or a writers' bulletin board will often encourage students to work on developing their presentation skills and to take pride in their writing as it is shared with others.

Teachers do not "teach" as isolated units or activities the conventions that constitute presentation skills; they do, however, need to help students acquire knowledge about rules and means of mastering careful proofreading and editing skills on their own. The suggestions on the following pages provide some strategies for both individual and group activities that can help students gain confidence and ability in presentation skills. These are identified by the stage at which the skill should be developing (B--beginning, I--intermediate, and A--advanced) rather than by grade level, since beginning writers need the same kind of intervention and instruction regardless of age. Activities can be modified to serve writers of varying age levels. Note that many of the activities are planned to help writers--alone or in groups--to "discover" the rules or conventions by which written language operates.

TEACHING PRESENTATION

SPELLING

1. The following activities are designed for young writers who are being taught spelling for the first time (B).
 - A. Word Toss: The student throws a bean-bag or eraser to another student in the class. The "toss" calls out a word, and the catcher must spell it. If the catcher spells the word correctly, he or she becomes the next tosser (B).
 - B. Human Alphabet: Distribute alphabet cards, one letter to each student. (Some extra vowels and consonants may be necessary, depending on the lesson.) Call out a word. Students who have the letters needed go to the front of the room and hold up cards to form the word (B).
2. Using a list of spelling "demons," make a card for each word, and give one card to each student. Have the students "teach" each other the correct spelling of their word. At the end of the week, give a test to see how many students have spelled each child's word correctly (B).
3. On file cards write the phonetic respelling of frequently misspelled words. In turn, students choose a card, pronounce, and spell the word. For example, (kum' ing), spell c-o-m-i-n-g (B,I).
4. Have students keep lists of their own misspelled words. On a three-column sheet, have the students write the correct spelling, the misspelling, and a short phrase describing what part of the word caused the trouble. Have the students try to find and analyze the recurring problems or patterns of problems they see on their lists. (For example, they may consistently confuse ie/ei words, or they may frequently miss doubled consonants before suffixes.) Encourage students to review their own lists frequently, and especially as they prepare a paper for publishing (B,I,A).
5. Rather than testing students from lists of commonly misspelled words, test them on the words they have misspelled and entered in their spelling notebooks (see previous activity). Since you probably will not have time to design individualized tests, have the students work in pairs, each student designing a spelling test for the other (I,A).
6. Have students learn mnemonic devices for spelling demons. Give them some examples such as "There's a rat in separate," and "Two i's are visible in visible." Then have the students, alone or in groups, invent mnemonic devices of their own (B,I,A).



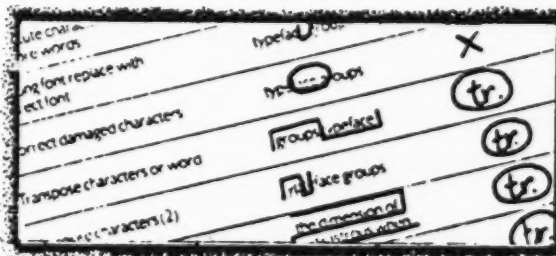
SPELLING--contd.

7. Play spelling games--"Ghost," for example. In this game one student thinks of a word and gives its first letter (not the letters "a" or "i" since they both spell a word). The next student thinks of a word that starts with the same letter and gives the first two letters of that word. And so on. The first person who completes the spelling of a word is out of the game. Anyone can be challenged to reveal the word he or she has in mind. If the word is a real one, the challenger is out (I,A).
8. Get students to "discover" spelling rules. Give them lists of words spelled correctly. Working in groups, the students are to discover the rules that govern the spellings--dropping silent e before -ing, doubling consonants before -ed, i before e, and the like (I,A).

Write charac- ters in words	Preceded by	X
Long form replace with short form	Preceded by	(tr.)
Correct damaged characters	Grouped	(tr.)
Transpose characters or word	Place group	(tr.)
Transpose characters (2)	Preceded by	(tr.)

SENTENCES

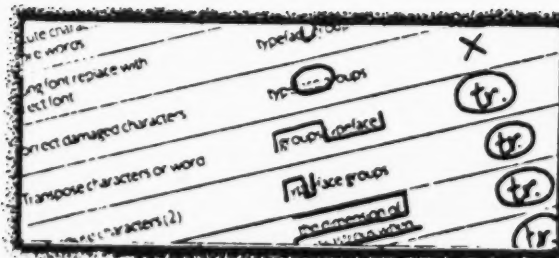
1. Get students to isolate what they have punctuated as sentences by this simple method. Tell them to put the index finger of the left hand on the sentence capital and the index finger of the right hand on the terminal punctuation (period, question mark, or exclamation point). With the sentence thus clearly taken out of context, students can check to see if they have punctuated appropriately and avoided fragments, run-ons, and comma splices (B,I,A).
2. To help students to eliminate fragments (most often caused by faulty punctuation of a subordinate clause), have them take any suspect sentence and ask a question based on it that can be answered yes or no. Then have them turn the question into a statement. If the result is not like the original, the original is probably a fragment. Example: "Waking up in the morning before the sun is shining." Q--"Do you like to wake up in the morning before the sun is shining?" A--"I like to wake up in the morning before the sun is shining." (I,A).
3. To discover sentence fragments or confusing constructions, have students read their papers aloud to each other. Hearing the sentence will often alert the writer to a sentence that doesn't say what was intended (B,I,A).
4. Use partner revision. Have writers "revise" drafts of each other's papers. Partner revision is valuable for what the partners' revisions show writers about their own writing, and for what students learn while they revise their partners' papers (I,A).
5. Take a fairly long sentence (one with interrupting modifying phrases and clauses, for example) and ask students to decide which parts of the sentence could be crossed out without destroying the meaning. Example: "Tired and hungry, the old man, his hair white with age, crawled into bed, pulling the covers up to his chin." Now, ask them to work in the opposite direction, giving them a kernel sentence and having them expand it by adding modifying phrases and interrupters. This exercise can help writers become more confident about the placement of commas and agreement of verbs and subjects in complex sentences (I,A).
6. To help students understand how much of the grammar of the language they already know, have them analyze nonsense sentences (such as Carroll's "Jabberwocky" or nonsense sentences you have made up) to determine which words are nouns, verbs, adjectives, and the like--or for beginning students, "action words," "naming



SENTENCES-contd.

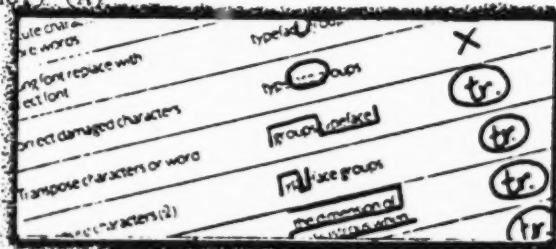
words," etc. Example: "The gloophy framjuts cloughed on the slingle upjonously." Better yet, have them invent their own nonsense sentences (I,A).

7. For a variation of this exercise, give them a group of sentences, each with a blank in a different position, representing the different parts of speech. For example, "The _____ slithered down the tree." "He _____ the old bicycle." "Tomorrow, he will _____ another bicycle." "She ran _____ over the hot sand." Then give them one nonsense word, like "knarf," and have them fit a form of the word into each of the slots, providing the appropriate ending for each sentence (I,A.)



PUNCTUATION AND CONVENTIONS

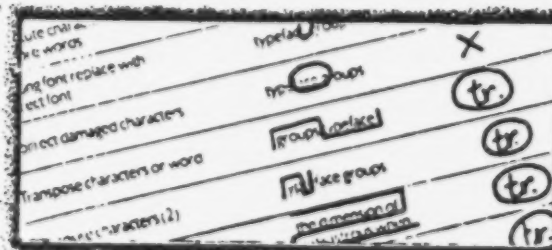
1. For young beginning writers, write sentences on strips, leaving out punctuation. Write punctuation marks on clothes pins. Have students clip clothes pins in the correct places (B).
2. For writers having trouble with contractions, the following activity will stress the importance of using the apostrophe. Write "shed," "were," "wed" on the board and have the students read the words aloud. Then write sentences using these words as contractions, but omit the apostrophes. Have the students read the sentences so that they can see for themselves that the words are not correct without the apostrophe and the meaning is lost (B,I).
3. Have students investigate the purely conventional nature of some punctuation marks and other usage practices--such as underlining titles, abbreviations, numerals versus words in writing about numbers, italics for emphasis. Have them bring in samples of such usages from textbooks, magazines, newspapers, or other printed material. In groups, students should try to formulate the "rules" for such conventions (I,A).
4. Have students write dialogues, and then show how punctuation is necessary to help the reader know who is speaking and to indicate what is direct and what is indirect discourse (I,A).
5. See how many different ways students can punctuate sentences such as the following: "What do you think you can get a coke and a hamburger free." Have them make up their own "punctuation challenges" (I,A).
6. Have students invent sentences with relative clauses that can be either restrictive or nonrestrictive. For example: "The company agrees that it will replace all parts which have been inspected at the point of manufacture." (Note that the comma can make a legal difference here.) This is an appropriate time to point out that commas often function to help writers "chunk" a sentence in the way they intend it to be read. The sentence "After she ate the hamburger sat like a rock in her stomach" needs a comma to avoid misreading or confusion. Have students invent pairs of sentences that read differently with and without punctuation. Example: "She is a pretty, intelligent student"; and "She is a pretty intelligent student." Or "The teacher quit criticizing our writing"; and "The teacher quit, criticizing our writing." (Note--Don't tell students to use a comma when they need to take a breath. It's an unreliable guideline for comma placement.) (A)



EDITING

These skills develop slowly, and are usually not taught in the primary grades.

1. Although primary students cannot edit their own writing, teachers might be able to use the following activities to introduce the concept of editing:
 - A. Flashcard punctuation--Each student has cards marked with end punctuation ("?", ";", ",", and "!"). As the teacher finishes reading a sentence, the students raise the card they think is appropriate (B).
 - B. Proofreading--Write a short story or passage on a master or on the board, leaving space between lines. Omit all capitalization and marks of punctuation. Have students supply all the missing marks and capitals. This may be done as an individual or a group activity (B).
2. Have the students read their own papers aloud to a partner, or have the partners read the papers. Encourage them to listen carefully for sentence sense and places where punctuation is needed for clarity (B,I,A).
3. Get students to "layer" their revision activity. That is, encourage them not to look for everything at one time. Have them go through a draft, first concentrating on the content and ideas; then, have them look for spelling and punctuation. It is difficult to assess all parts of a piece of writing at the same time (B,I,A).
4. Cover all but one paragraph, and have students edit and revise only one paragraph at a time. As does the activity above, this exercise helps students focus on one small part of the piece of writing, allowing them to concentrate on a more manageable unit (B,I,A).
5. Have students proofread backwards in order to catch typos and misspellings (I,A).
6. Devise a file folder with worksheets for practice on recurring problems in punctuation or grammar. Include answer keys. When papers are ready to be edited, have the students choose the worksheets according to the particular area in which they are having difficulty. After they have worked through the exercises, have them check their own work (I,A).



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SOME FINAL THOUGHTS

Now that you've arrived at the end of this manual, you may be wondering just how best to use the information in it to further the aims of your school's writing program. As we teacher/authors compiled this manual, we were conscious of several things that may help you make Teacher to Teacher a usable document within the confines of your classroom teaching.

* Teacher to Teacher is not meant to be a classroom text for you to use or a quick classroom grading system for you to adopt. We say this because good writing is not the sum of accomplishment in five separate traits, each equally important. We can identify characteristics of good writing, and we can say to students, "I really enjoyed the ideas you told me about in your paper," or "Let's work together to define a clearer purpose in this essay. You seem to be having trouble clarifying what you want your piece to do." But good writing is not 20% good ideas, 20% clear purpose, etc., nor does a sense of purpose develop necessarily before ideas or direction.

This principle simply means that Teacher to Teacher is not--and was never meant to be--a sequential guide to the teaching of composition nor a quick, easy way to evaluate the writing our students do for us. A teacher would not start with the chapter on Purpose in September, do the activities in that section, and then march ahead to Direction. Nor should a teacher make a grading scale from the traits discussed here. Instead, teachers can use the material to frame activities when they evaluate or when their schools' assessment of writing indicates a need. In other words, Teacher to Teacher is a resource for you--a resource to be used when the need for help arises.

* We believe very strongly that teachers of writing are most effective when they are informed about how language skills develop in students. We hope, therefore, that you enjoy--and learn much--from looking at papers from grade levels you aren't teaching now. We hope high school teachers will be fascinated by the work of elementary students, and that teachers of grade school will find it illustrative to see how older students write.

You will notice too that although we have marked the activities teachers are sharing with you as "Elementary," "Middle School," or "High School," many of the teaching strategies are applicable across the grade levels. We encourage you to adapt the ideas as you need or want to.

* And finally, we have tried to make this manual as user-friendly as it can be. The three-hole binder may not be the most beautiful cover we could have chosen, but the format allows you to add pages, to pull pages out for duplication (and permission is given for you to do this at any time!), or to make comments and notes in the manual. We hope you see it as colleague-friendly too: we encourage you to share the material with teachers of other disciplines. Schools need every teacher's help and support if our students are to write well.

Our hope is that Teacher to Teacher is open at your desks often, and that it makes the important work we all do with and for our students successful.

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Appendix

ASSESSMENT:
a primer
for teachers

APPENDIX

ASSESSMENT: A PRIMER FOR TEACHERS

One of the assumptions discussed at the beginning of this manual was that wide-scale assessment of student writing is crucial to our schools' writing programs and to our own classroom teaching. In order to assess writing on a broad scale (i.e., to test the writing of all students at a certain grade level), teachers and administrators have to decide what the qualities of "effective" or "acceptable" writing are for their students. As a result, assessment helps the schools define what needs to be taught (the objectives of their writing program). At the same time, assessment tells us teachers what we should expend time and energy on in the classroom and when we should provide "intervention" for students who do not show the "competency" we expect.

Because of assessment's intrinsic importance to what we are doing in our schools, we teachers need to understand how our schools go about the task of assessing the writing of our students. Then, at crucial points, we need to participate actively in the schools' assessment program. Following is a general explanation of the reasons schools embark on wide-scale assessment and the problems they must solve when they make that important decision, together with a discussion of where in that process we teachers play an important role.

School systems, charged with the responsibility of providing good education for all their students, need to be sure that what is being taught is being learned. The only way to find out whether learning is really happening is to evaluate the progress of students periodically. But when schools decide to do wide-scale testing of student writing, they immediately face some very difficult questions. Is it possible to have students in large numbers--perhaps as many as thousands--do a piece of writing under conditions similar enough to be fair to all? Is there a way for several thousand student essays to be assessed reliably, efficiently, and quickly enough so that teachers and students can use the information meaningfully? Can the readers of those essays agree on the standards by which the work will be evaluated? What should those standards be? And who should devise them? Most importantly, can the assessment be set up so that we get an honest, reliable picture of what students can do?

As difficult as these questions seem, school systems can find models and methods that do provide answers. It is possible, for example, to control testing conditions by standardizing the topic, the conditions of writing, and the directions to students. Teachers can (as has been proved often) agree in their assessment of student writing, if there are carefully structured guidelines to follow and if teachers meet in advance of scoring sessions to review sample papers and discuss them thoroughly enough to arrive at a consensus on what constitutes levels of performance. If papers are read by at least two readers, working independently; and if students' work is not identified by name, school, or teacher, readers' judgments can be very reliable and unbiased. And it

is possible, as schools have discovered, to use technology advantageously--to utilize computers to collate readers' scores, to arrive at averages, and to produce usable reports.

Nevertheless, even though wide-scale assessment can be made manageable, the decision to engage in it is no easy one. School systems and their teachers make a real commitment when they decide to undertake wide-scale assessment. Mountains of papers do not get scored unless teachers can commit adequate time and effort and unless districts can compensate teachers for their labors. Coordinating the many activities of an assessment program--from distributing tests to meeting with teachers to go over directions; from supervising the "computer runs" of the scoring sheets to making sure that dates and times are coordinated with all the other school activities--is no easy task. School systems that decide to use wide-scale assessment need to provide testing coordinators or supervisory staff with the time they need to perform these extra, exacting tasks. But the benefits of assessment--the information it gives, the attention it pays to an important area of instruction, the opportunity it affords to teachers for collegial activity--are well worth that commitment.

This appendix explains how the assessment program in the Youngstown and Mahoning County schools has been set up and is being implemented. First, you will find an outline of principles that teachers and administrators have followed in organizing and planning the program. Following that brief section, you will find both an abbreviated outline of the activities that take place during the yearly assessment at the designated grade levels, and finally, descriptions in more detail of the places in the assessment where teachers have prime responsibility for activities.

SOME GUIDING PRINCIPLES

So that wide-scale assessment can be reliable and fair and yield the kind of information that is most helpful to students, teachers, and schools, certain conditions have to be met and certain procedures must be followed scrupulously. The guiding principle is to control as many variables as possible so that the conditions under which the work is written are as much the same as can be achieved; so that the work is read with the least possible chance for bias or preconceptions; and so that results are used for the purposes for which they are intended.

1. Students at the same grade level need to write on the same topic. There may be (and should be) choice within an assigned topic, to give the students options for developing the topic, but students should not have to choose between two or more topics. Giving them choices among the topics would mean that they would have to decide about topics that varied in difficulty, had different purposes or required different modes of development, or had different audiences to address.
2. Students need to have the same amount of time to complete the assignment, no matter what school they are in. If, for example, one school has a 40-minute class period and another 45-,

the students at both schools should have the same amount of time--perhaps, in this case, 35 minutes. Schools have decided that students will have two successive days to complete the writing. This means that students who are absent for the testing or miss one day of the two-day sequence should be given equal time under as similar circumstances as possible to "make up" the assignment. If these make-up conditions cannot be guaranteed, those students' papers should not be read with the others, or should be identified in some way as "one day only."

3. Students should be given the same instructions/clarifications/explanations in all classrooms. The best way to control this situation is to have the instructions written out for the teacher to read. Teachers should not supplement the instructions or give the students strategies or hints about how to go about the writing.
4. For purposes of unbiased reading, students' names, the schools they attend, and their teachers' names will not appear on the essays. Code numbers are used on the papers themselves. Students should also be cautioned not to use in their essays "real" names that identify themselves or their schools. Topics, of course, need to be carefully phrased so that such identification is not encouraged. In reading sessions, teachers will find papers "shuffled" so that papers from the same teacher's students will not be together.
5. For this writing, students should not be allowed the use of writers' tools like dictionaries, handbooks, thesauruses, etc. Not every school room will have these references available for every student. Anchor papers will be chosen that reflect the fact that students were writing their pieces without such references.
6. All papers will receive at least two independent readings by teachers. The second reader will not have access to the first reader's scores. In addition, there will be a check to make sure the two readers do not veer too widely in their scores. If they do, then a third reader will be brought in to score the paper again.
7. The assessment program is developed to help the student write better. Its purposes are not to indicate failure on the part of the school, the teacher, or the student. On the basis of this one piece of writing, written at a particular point in a student's school years, we can make some judgment about how best to help students in our classes. But we need to remember that the development of language skill is not the province of just the teacher who happened to have the student at that moment; we share that responsibility with parents, with the students themselves, with other teachers, with past teachers, etc.

AN OUTLINE OF THE ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

SCHEDULE TESTING DATES	TESTING COORDINATOR
PREPARE STUDENT LABELS	TESTING COORDINATOR
DEVELOP WRITING TOPICS	*TESTING COORDINATOR AND TEACHERS
PREPARE TEST PACKETS AND TEACHERS' INSTRUCTIONS	TESTING COORDINATOR
MEET WITH TEACHERS TO REVIEW INSTRUCTIONS AND DISTRIBUTE TEST PACKETS	TESTING COORDINATOR
SUPERVISE STUDENT WRITING IN CLASS	*TEACHERS
COLLECT PAPERS FROM SCHOOLS	TESTING COORDINATOR
SELECT ANCHOR PAPERS	*TESTING COORDINATOR AND SELECTED TEACHERS
PREPARE TRAINING FOLDERS (include topics, scoring rubrics, and copies of anchor papers)	TESTING COORDINATOR
ATTEND TRAINING SESSION FOR SCORING	*TEACHERS
READING/SCORING SESSIONS	*TEACHERS
TAKE SCORING SHEETS TO COMPUTER	TESTING COORDINATOR
DO THIRD READINGS WHERE NECESSARY	*TEACHERS
PREPARE AND DISTRIBUTE REPORTS TO SCHOOLS	TESTING COORDINATOR
DISTRIBUTE AND REVIEW REPORTS	*TEACHERS

NOTE: Places where teachers are involved (marked by asterisk in right column are described in detail in the following pages.

THE TEACHERS' PART IN ASSESSMENT

While much of the responsibility for assessment falls naturally upon the shoulders of program testing coordinators, at crucial times during assessment we classroom teachers must be active in the planning and execution of assessment. Those times when our support and our aid are especially needed are described in the following paragraphs.

DEVELOPING AND REVISING THE TRAIT SCORING GUIDES

The teachers of the Youngstown and Mahoning County Schools developed the methods by which wide-scale assessment would be done in our schools. They decided that for their purposes, it would be best to score papers on the basis of a descriptive, analytic scale outlining performance levels in five qualities or "traits" of writing. Teachers, working collaboratively, wrote the document that describes and defines the traits of the writing of secondary school students, and other teachers adapted that document to the writing of students in both junior high and elementary school.

Like all important documents, however, these teacher-generated guides need to be reviewed and revised periodically. And we teachers are the ones responsible for such review. Copies of the trait scoring guides and the one-page summaries ("rubrics") can be found in the pages directly following this appendix.

FRAMING THE WRITING TOPIC FOR THE ASSESSMENT

How often have we agonized over a writing assignment that we want to give our students! We want to make sure it's clear, that all our students can write something about it, and that it elicits the kind of information we want it to. The task--creating a good prompt for writing--is vastly compounded in difficulty when testing coordinators have to design a writing assignment for as many as 2000 children in over 150 different fourth grade classrooms!

Our own expertise and experience as classroom teachers are assets to those charged with the monumental and crucial task of designing assessment topics. Topics that have "worked" in our classrooms will be greatly appreciated and should be submitted to the testing coordinator. Some teachers may be asked to serve on a committee to frame writing topics for the year's assessment.

In addition, writing topics may often have to be "pre-tested" to make sure that they are clearly stated and usable by a particular age group. We may be asked to help in this task by giving our classes (but not the ones who will actually be assessed) the topic and seeing how our students respond to it.

The writing topics for 1986-87 for 4th, 7th, and 11th grades follow the appendix.

ADMINISTERING THE TESTS

After topics have been selected and test packets prepared, teachers are notified when the writing should be done in the classroom. It is our responsibility as teachers to set the proper tone for the testing. We need to test as many of our students as we can, since we will be depending on the results to give us and our school valuable information. We should announce to our students as early as possible when the writing will be done (a two-day period) and encourage them to take the testing seriously, reminding them to come with pen and pencil, and then carefully giving the instructions that have been sent with the test.

All teachers are aware that writers may be "blocked" by anxiety or fear of writing. It is our responsibility to be supportive and understanding of our students without negating the importance of what they are doing or trivializing the experience.

At the end of this appendix, you will find a copy of "Instructions to Teachers," outlining the procedure that students follow.

SCORING THE ESSAYS

After the essays have been written, they are prepared for reading sessions. Essays are sorted, all identification is removed, and score sheets are attached to each paper. After these preliminary steps have been completed by the testing coordinator for the schools, we teachers are called upon to participate in the reading sessions. Our involvement at this stage is crucial, since it is our expertise as writing teachers that is needed.

Sometimes teachers wonder whether we all should read--or whether readers ought to be just those teachers whose students were tested. There are practical reasons for all of us sharing in the scoring: in order for so many papers to be read, we must all help with the scoring (although the school will reward us for our work either by providing released time for the scoring or by paying us a modest stipend for after-school reading sessions). A much more compelling reason to participate, however, is the testimony of teachers who have read and who say that getting together with colleagues from their school and other schools to discuss student writing is an enjoyable, interesting, and useful experience.

Occasionally teachers question how the papers can be read accurately by a roomful of people who sometimes (quite notoriously) share different perceptions of what makes "good writing." Preceding the reading, we are asked to attend what is often called a "training session," in which readers--both those who have read before and those who have not--come together to discuss pre-selected "anchor papers," drawn from the essays written by the students during a given testing period. That training session gives us the opportunity to come to consensus before the reading actually begins, and to score and discuss papers together informally. (Copies of anchor papers follow this appendix.)

During the reading sessions, we actually read and score the packets of student papers. We are assigned a three-number "evaluator code" and given instructions on how to mark the scoring sheet. Two readers read each paper and score it, with the first reader removing his or her completed score sheet before the second reader receives the paper.

We stop periodically for breaks and reorientation to the anchor papers. Because we record only five scores (one for each trait) and our evaluator code, the scoring moves quickly and efficiently.

RECEIVING THE RESULTS

After the scored papers have been collected, the testing coordinator supervises the computer scanning of the score sheets and has the reports "run" and distributed. We teachers then receive two kinds of reports: student reports and a teacher's report for each class we teach. The student's report is an individualized letter to the student, giving the averaged scores from each reader in each of the five traits, with a short explanation of what each trait signifies. Two copies of the student's letter are sent: one for the student and one for us to keep at the school in the student's writing folder or to be filed by the department chair. In addition, we receive a class summary of our students' work. This teacher report tells us how many of our students in each class ranked at high (6-7), middle (3-4-5), and low (1-2) range for each of the traits and what the mean and median scores are for each trait. Copies of a sample student report, a teacher report, and a school report can be found after the appendix.

What is our responsibility with these results? First, we need to make sure that students understand what the reports say. We have to remember (as the letters to students plainly say) that this report is the assessment of one writing sample taken at a particular point in the students' schooling. It affords the students and us some insight into how well or how poorly they wrote papers at this time, the features of those papers having been evaluated by two different readers (or even three, if the first two readers disagreed beyond a stated range in their scoring). Copies of the students' reports that stay at the school are useful, too, in many ways: as materials to review with parents at conference times when they are eager to know how their children are doing in writing; as tools for guidance counselors to use when schedules are being made; as help for teachers who will have those children the following year and want to make preliminary plans for teaching; and, of course and most importantly, as ways for us to direct, to change, or to supplement our instruction in the classroom to meet our particular students' needs.

Teachers' reports are important documents, too, since they allow us to see how many students need intervention, what kind is needed, and what we can safely assume are skills that most of the class has mastered. The impetus of assessment is improvement of our teaching and help for us in planning. That this is assessment's dominant purpose is borne out by the fact that teachers' reports come only to us.

A FINAL NOTE

Our responsibilities include teaching as well as learning from the results of our teaching. The heart of Teacher to Teacher and of Project Areté itself is the emphasis on what we teachers do when we close our classroom doors and begin to teach students how to use language effectively. But we wear a second hat, too. We are part of a school system that must provide students with the best opportunities for learning. We cannot teach effectively without knowing what we should teach, or reteach if need be. We are not really part of a school system until we assume some responsibility for its programs. Meaningful writing programs--the goal of both assessment and teaching--are what our schools and we desire.

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PURPOSE

HIGH:

The writer understands the assignment and fulfills it. Focus is maintained on the main idea of the essay, and the writer shows an awareness of audience stated or implied in the assignment.

MIDDLE:

The writer attempts to fulfill the assignment but does not always maintain a clear focus on the main idea. There may be an awareness of the audience, though it may not be consistently developed or appropriate.

LOW:

The writer does not understand the assignment or ignores it; as a result, the essay is either totally off the topic or merely repeats, rather than develops, that topic. There is no evidence that the writer is aware of an audience. The work is a loose collection of ideas or details, making no point.

DIRECTION

HIGH:

The essay has a clear beginning, middle, and end, and its pattern of development is interesting and effective. Transitions are often smooth and somewhat varied. The paper has a sense of paragraphing in that main ideas and details are clustered together appropriately.

MIDDLE:

The essay starts well but may be flawed by weak organization or lack of closure. Development may be somewhat illogical, and if transitional words are used to hold the details together, they are often repetitious. The paper has little sense of paragraphing.

LOW:

The writer does not help the reader get into the subject, and the paper stops abruptly. There is a noticeable lack of organization, causing the reader to wonder where the paper is going. The writing seems choppy since few, if any, transitional words are used. The paper has no sense of effective paragraphing.

IDEAS

HIGH:

The essay has creative, imaginative ideas in sufficient quantity to develop the topic well. There is a feeling that the ideas chosen are important to the writer, and those ideas are supported by sufficient details to make them understandable and/or convincing.

MIDDLE:

The ideas given by the writer to develop the topic are acceptable and appropriate, but are also limited or uneven. As a result, parts of the essay may be well done while others are incomplete or faulty. The writer's use of ideas strikes the reader as limited in imagination or creativity.

LOW:

The essay has very few ideas or generalizations, so it is vague, abstract, and unsupported. The reader feels the writer has no feeling about or interest in the topic.

STYLE

HIGH:

The writing in the essay strikes the reader as interesting and appealing. Its vocabulary is varied and expressive, especially in descriptive words, and there may even be figurative language used. Sentences are clear and may go beyond simple S-V-O structures. The point of view adopted by the writer is consistent, and pronouns are substituted appropriately for nouns.

MIDDLE:

The language in the essay is fairly predictable, unvaried, and somewhat limited. Instead of surprising the reader with its vocabulary; for example, the paper relies on overused adjectives (it's "nice"), and the sentence structure is repetitive and marked by an over-reliance on similar, basic patterns. There is a limited, but appropriate, use of pronouns.

LOW:

The writer uses few, if any, descriptive words, and there is no attempt to use figurative language or to be aware of what language can do. Short, primer sentences, often run together indiscriminately, make for a sameness of language. Pronouns are inconsistently or erratically used, sometimes even within one sentence.

PRESENTATION

HIGH:

The essay is relatively error-free in simple and compound sentences, but not necessarily in more complicated or varied sentence patterns. There are a few errors in usage and few errors in usage and few serious violations of punctuation, capitalization, etc. beyond what appear to be slips of the pen. Misspellings, other than occasional careless errors, occur only in words that are hard to spell.

MIDDLE:

The essay contains some errors, but they do not confuse the overall meaning of the piece. There are occasional errors in sentence structure, but the writer still demonstrates an overall awareness of how to put sentences together correctly. There are some errors in punctuation, capitalization, and usage beyond careless mistakes. There are some spelling errors and/or violations of spelling rules.

LOW:

The essay contains so many errors in sentence structure and usage that the reader has difficulty interpreting what the writer means. Basic punctuation is omitted or haphazard, resulting in fragments, run-on sentences, etc. There are many spelling errors, even if often-used words.

PURPOSE
(Control of topic/awareness
of purpose, audience)

High

1. Writer understands and fulfills assignment.
2. Focus on main point.
3. Awareness of audience stated or implied in assignment.

Middle

1. Attempts to fulfill assignment.
2. Focus drifts.
3. Inconsistent or inappropriate sense of audience.

Low

1. Misinterprets, ignores assignments.
2. No point made.
3. Loses focus.
4. Little or no awareness of audience.

Qualities Included:

1. Addressing of topic (purpose, audience)
2. Focus of essay.

DIRECTION
(Organization)

High

1. Effective organization (introduction, development, closing.)
2. Good transitional words and phrases.
3. Logical grouping of ideas.

Middle

1. Adequate organization (predictable opening, development, lack of or ineffective ending).
2. Few or mechanical transitions.
3. Unclear or illogical sense of development.

Low

1. No organized pattern (no introduction, skimpy development, unsatisfactory ending.
2. No transition between ideas--reader confused.
3. Erratic occurrence of ideas.

Qualities Included:

1. Sense of organization (beginning, middle, end).
2. Transitions between ideas
3. Logical grouping of ideas--sense of paragraphing.

IDEAS
(Originality, insight)

High

1. Quantity of ideas sufficient to develop
2. Quality of ideas--related, original, specific, creative.

Middle

1. Quantity of ideas limited or uneven; some points unsupported.
2. Quality of ideas predictable, expected, though acceptable and appropriate.

Low

1. Quantity of ideas poor--ideas unsupported, generalized.
2. Quality of ideas--vague, inappropriate, unrelated.

Qualities Included:

1. Quantity of ideas--sufficient to develop topic.
2. Quality of ideas--creative, surprising, appropriate.

STYLE
(Inventiveness manipulation
of sentences)

High

1. Sentence structures clear and varied.
2. Consistent, honest point of view.
3. Vocabulary varied, expressive, appropriate.
4. May include figurative language.
5. Effective pronoun use.

Middle

1. Sentence structure mostly S-V-O.
2. Little variation in sentence openings.
3. Language may be inflated, self-conscious.
4. Vocabulary limited, expected.
5. Some pronoun use.

Low

1. Short, primer sentences.
2. Choppy, or unbalanced constructions.
3. Vocabulary limited, repetitious, basic only.

Qualities Included:

1. Mature, varied sentence structure.
2. Appropriate vocabulary
3. Sense of language awareness.

PRESENTATION
(Correctness)

High

1. Relatively mistake-free.
2. Sentence structure correct.
3. Few errors in usage.
4. Spelling generally correct; consistent.

Middle

1. Occasional errors not distracting to reader.
2. Most sentence structures correct.
3. Some errors in usage.
4. Spelling typical of "average" work.

Low

1. Many errors make reading difficult.
2. Obvious, distracting errors in usage.
3. Many spelling errors in simple words.
4. Sentence syntax hard to follow (run-ons, fragments, fused patterns).

Qualities Included:

1. SENTENCE STRUCTURE (fragments, run-ons, sentence structure confused).
2. USAGE (S-V agreement, pronoun reference, modifiers, homonyms, verb tense, correct word choice).
3. MECHANICS (punctuation, capitalization, identification).
4. SPELLING

PURPOSE

HIGH:

The writer has a clear sense of what the purpose and audience specified in the topic area are, and the work focuses successfully on a major point. The stance adopted by the writer is consistently and appropriately handled. If asked to do so, the writer goes beyond the personal to demonstrate a larger purpose and makes the point of the essay effectively.

MIDDLE:

The writer attempts to address the purpose and audience specified in the topic, but the essay may drift from its major point and the intention of the writer, while present, may be vague. The point of view adopted by the writer may shift somewhat. If the writer has been asked to go beyond the personal he or she may lose sight of the larger point being made in the work.

LOW:

The writer misinterprets the topic, ignores the purpose and audience specified in the topic, or gives no evidence of making a point in the essay. There is no consistent or focused point of view, and the reader is left wondering if the writer had an intention or purpose for writing at all. The writer ignores an invitation to go beyond the personal, if the topic asks him or her to do so, and the essay simply recounts the personal with no larger purpose or point being made.

DIRECTION

HIGH:

The essay moves the reader along in an organized way, getting the reader into the subject through an introduction or opening, developing the ideas completely enough that the reader is not left with unanswered questions, and ending satisfactorily with a sense of closure. Although they may be used somewhat mechanically, enough transitional words and phrases are used to help the reader move from point to point. A good sense of paragraphing (evidenced by logical grouping of ideas) is present.

MIDDLE:

The reader can follow the essay, although a somewhat predictable opening, rather skimpily developed body, and a lack of or an ineffective closing mar its sense of wholeness. There are few transitions, and when they do appear, they are mechanical, simple, and often redundant. Ideas may be grouped illogically, forcing the reader to make connections between them. Although the reader is led along by the writer, there is the feeling that something is missing.

LOW:

The paper has no discernible organizational pattern or structure, contains no introduction to get the reader into the subject, presents unconnected ideas, and ends abruptly and unsatisfactorily. Ideas occur erratically, with little or no sense of logical grouping, or they may repeat themselves. The reader is not assisted with transitional devices, so the paper leaves questions in the reader's mind of where it is going and how.

IDEAS

HIGH:

The ideas in the essay are specific, varied, related to the topic, and in sufficient number to support the essay adequately. In addition, the reader responds to the ideas because they are creative, surprising, and original.

MIDDLE:

The ideas in the essay are acceptable, but predictable and rather ordinary and expected. Some points may be well supported, while others are limited in their development or explanation, and are therefore unconvincing. The paper seems uneven: at times acceptable and developed, at other times, incomplete or skimpy or confusing.

LOW:

When and if ideas are incorporated, they are inappropriate or repetitious, vague, or completely unrelated to the topic being discussed. Most of the time the paper remains generalized. Any ideas are supported by too few details, which usually are unclear and confusing.

STYLE

HIGH:

There is a real sense of the individual writer at work, because the language used is personal, honest, and appropriate. There is little or no evidence of inflated, overdone, or self-conscious writing. Sentences are varied and include complex and compound structures, and a pleasing variety of sentence types and patterns makes the reading delightful. The vocabulary is vivid, effective, natural and appropriate to the topic. There may be figurative language used.

MIDDLE:

The style of a middle quality paper may be marred because of padding, ineffective repetition, or inflated, self-conscious vocabulary. Although there may be some complex structures, most of the sentences are arranged in a S-V-O fashion, with little variation in sentence openings. Vocabulary is sufficient to express the ideas, but limited, somewhat expected, or inappropriate for the topic.

LOW:

The writer has a limited vocabulary and there is much repetition. Vocabulary may be inappropriate to the subject under discussion. Because the sentences are primer style (mostly S-V patterns), the paper reads in a choppy, disconnected and decidedly immature way. There is little, if any, sense of sentence rhythm or balance.

PRESENTATION

HIGH:

An assignment that is evaluated as high is one that is relatively mistake free. The sentence structure is generally correct, even in varied and more complicated sentence patterns. There are few errors in usage (e.g., subject-verb agreement, pronoun usage, etc.) by present standards of formal written English. There are no serious violations of punctuation, capitalization, indentation, use of numbers conventions. Misspellings occur only in words that are hard to spell. The spelling is consistent; words are not spelled correctly in one sentence and misspelled in another.

MIDDLE:

An assignment that is evaluated as middle is one that contains a few errors in some areas, but they do not detract from the overall meaning. The sentence structure is generally correct, but there may be occasional errors in more complicated patterns: errors in parallelisms, subordination, consistency of tenses, reference of pronouns, etc. There are a few departures from conventional usage, but not enough to obscure meaning or to become very noticeable or distracting to the reader. There are some violations of punctuation, capitalization, indentation, abbreviations, use of numbers conventions. There may be several spelling errors in hard words and a few violations of spelling rules, but no more than one finds in an average paper.

LOW:

An assignment that is evaluated as low contains sufficient errors to detract from the overall meaning. There are so many errors in sentence patterns and basic usage that the reader has difficulty interpreting what the writer means. Basic punctuation is omitted or haphazard, resulting in fragments, run-on sentences, etc. There are many spelling errors, particularly in often-used and simple words.

May 1986

PURPOSE
(Control of topic/awareness
of purpose, audience)

High

1. Clear sense of purpose/
audience specified in
topic.
2. Focus on main point.
3. Goes beyond personal (if
asked to do so) to make
point.

Middle

1. Attempts to address
purpose/audience specified
in topic.
2. Focus drifts.
3. May lose sight of "larger"
purpose.

Low

1. Misinterprets, ignores
assignments.
2. No point made.
3. Loses focus.

Qualities Included:

1. Addressing of topic
(purpose, audience)
2. Focus of essay.

DIRECTION
(Organization)

High

1. Effective organization
(introduction, develop-
ment, closing).
2. Good transitional words
and phrases.
3. Logical grouping of ideas.

Middle

1. Adequate organization
(predictable opening, de-
velopment, lack of or in-
effective ending).
2. Few or mechanical tran-
sitions.
3. Reader feels something
missing in development.

Low

1. No organized pattern (no
introduction, skimpy de-
velopment, unsatisfactory
ending.
2. No transition between
ideas--reader confused.
3. Erratic occurrence of
ideas.

Qualities Included:

1. Sense of organization (be-
ginning, middle, end).
2. Transitions between ideas
3. Logical grouping of
ideas--sense of paragraph-
ing.

IDEAS
(Originality, insight)

High

1. Quantity of ideas
sufficient to develop
2. Quality of ideas--related,
original, specific,
creative.

Middle

1. Quantity of ideas limited
or uneven; some points
unsupported.
2. Quality of ideas predict-
able, expected.

Low

1. Quantity of ideas
poor--ideas unsupported,
generalized.
2. Quality of ideas--vague,
inappropriate, unrelated.

Qualities Included:

1. Quantity of ideas--
sufficient to develop
topic.
2. Quality of ideas--
creative, surprising,
appropriate.

STYLE
(Inventiveness, manipulation
of sentences)

High

1. Sentence structure varied,
rhythmic (includes complex
and compound sentences).
2. Personal, honest writing.
3. Vocabulary vivid, appro-
priate.
4. May include figurative
language use.

Middle

1. Sentence structure mostly
S-V-O.
2. Little variation in sen-
tence openings.
3. Language may be inflated,
self-conscious.
4. Vocabulary limited, expect-
ed.

Low

1. Sentence structure primer
(S-V).
2. Choppy, immature style.
3. Vocabulary limited, repe-
titious, basic only.

Qualities Included:

1. Mature, varied sentence
structure.
2. Appropriate vocabulary
3. Sense of language aware-
ness.

PRESENTATION
(Correctness)

High

1. Relatively mistake-free.
2. Sentence structure
correct.
3. Few errors in usage.
4. Spelling generally
correct; consistent.

Middle

1. Occasional errors not
distracting to reader.
2. Most sentence structures
correct.
3. Some errors in usage.
4. Spelling typical of "aver-
age" work.

Low

1. Many errors make reading
difficult.
2. Obvious, distracting
errors in usage.
3. Many spelling errors in
simple words.
4. Sentence syntax hard to
follow (run-ons, frag-
ments, fused patterns).

Qualities Included:

1. SENTENCE STRUCTURE
(fragments, run-ons,
sentence structure
confused).
2. USAGE (S-V agreement, pro-
noun reference, modifiers,
homonyms, verb tense,
correct word choice).
3. MECHANICS (punctuation,
capitalization, identifi-
cation.
4. SPELLING

PURPOSE

HIGH:

The writer not only understands the assignment, but also fulfills it with imagination and creativity. The writing demonstrates that the author is always in firm control of the subject and treats it clearly and completely. The writer has a developed awareness of who his audience is, and not only informs, but also entertains or even persuades the reader. The writer's intentions are made clear to the reader throughout the essay.

MIDDLE:

The writer makes an attempt to fulfill the task at hand, and the work is done in a competent, although mundane and uninspired way. There are few surprises for the reader, who can fairly well predict both the content and the outcome of the essay. The writer does not seem to have a clear awareness of who his audience is. The focus of the essay may drift somewhat from beginning to end, giving the impression that the writer is not always in full control of the topic or purpose, although there may be some refocusing and redirecting toward the end of the piece.

LOW:

The writer either does not understand what the assignment demands, or else begins on target, but drifts quickly from the focus and intended purpose. The writing starts in one place and ends up someplace else. The writer obviously does not know who his audience is, and rarely even addresses a particular audience. Organization, also, is considerably lacking. There is little, if any, sense that the writer has any interest either in the subject or in the task at hand. There is often no attempt to entertain or even inform the reader.

DIRECTION

HIGH:

The writer focuses on a specific, manageable thesis which guides the reader smoothly in a deliberate, controlled, and interesting pattern. The writing has a discernible beginning, middle, and end and contains details and examples which seem both authentic and appropriate. In addition, the writer demonstrates an awareness of which of these details and examples to emphasize and how they are to be ordered. Furthermore, the writer makes effective and creative use of transitions, resulting in a paper with an apparent, logical, and easy development.

MIDDLE:

The writer's thesis is inappropriately focused, yet the writing has some sense of direction. The writing is developed with examples and details, but these are often predictable or unsurprising. Transitions are used, but they are often mechanical and repetitious. The paper seems imbalanced and might contain forced logic or flawed emphasis.

LOW:

The writer seems unaware of any organizational pattern at all. As a result, and even though the paper may have a thesis, it lacks a sense of direction or seems completely out of the control of the writer. The paper either contains no details or uses details carelessly or in such an unrelated fashion that they seem only an attempt to lengthen the composition, not develop it. There is little or no use of transitional devices, causing the reader to have to invent logical connections between the ideas.

IDEAS

HIGH:

The writer uses original, fresh, and unusual ideas; the paper manages, in fact, to make the common uncommon. Sufficient to develop the topic, the points are appropriate and developed enough to convince the reader and satisfy the task at hand. In addition, details are related and described with depth and specificity; the writer not only uses real experiences, but discusses them with insight.

MIDDLE:

The writer offers supporting ideas, but they are usually predictable and mundane. There are sufficient details, but they are somewhat limited in range. There is some unevenness in development with some points unsubstantiated.

LOW:

The writer offers few ideas, and they are often unclear. The writer is not able to support the topic, so the essay remains generalized and unconvincing. If details are used, they are sparse, superficial, repetitious, and often unrelated to the topic. The writer gives the impression of being unable to find any relationship between real experience and the assignment.

STYLE

HIGH:

The writing is interesting owing to its sincerity, individuality, and variety. The point of view is consistent, and the reader senses that the writer has consciously created a persona; nevertheless the writing creates an intimacy between writer and reader. The writer projects a unique voice through using the unexpected word or phrase, perhaps even through the intentional violation of convention. Clichés are avoided. The writer is able to draw upon figurative language and various rhetorical devices successfully to add variety and emphasis. The vocabulary is rich; both the vocabulary and the sentence constructions are varied. Sentences are rhythmic and balanced; some are even graceful and elegant.

MIDDLE:

The writing is somewhat pedestrian and uninteresting. The writer may lack a consistent point of view. The reader remains at a distance. While the diction and sentence constructions are usually appropriate, they are also predictable. The vocabulary is limited, and the writer

may rely on clichés. The writer is unsuccessful in attempting to use figurative language and various rhetorical devices. There is little variety in sentence construction; sentences are stiff, though not actually awkward.

LOW:

The writing is immature and discordant. Having no point of view from which to view the material, the writer seems bored with the task at hand. The reader is irritated by inaccuracies and unwarranted shifts in diction. The vocabulary is noticeably deficient, and the writer strings together clichés. The writer does not draw upon figurative language and various rhetorical devices. Sentence constructions are unvaried or awkward.

PRESENTATION

HIGH:

An assignment that is evaluated as high is one that is relatively mistake-free. The sentence structure is generally correct even in varied and complicated sentence patterns. Fragments are acceptable if used effectively and sparingly. There are few errors in usage by present standards of formal written English. There are no serious violations of punctuation, capitalization, abbreviation, use of numbers, etc., beyond what appear to be slips of the pen. Misspellings occur only in words that are hard to spell. The spelling is consistent; words are not spelled correctly in one sentence and misspelled in another.

MIDDLE:

An assignment that is evaluated as middle is one that contains a few errors in some areas, but they should not detract from the overall meaning. The sentence structure is generally correct, but there may be occasional errors in complicated patterns; errors in parallelism, subordination, consistency of tenses, reference of pronouns, etc. There are a few departures from conventional usage, but not enough to obscure meaning or to become very noticeable to the reader. There are some violations of punctuation, capitalization, abbreviations, use of numbers, etc., beyond what appear to be slips of the pen. There may be several spelling errors in hard words and a few violations of spelling rules, but no more than one finds in the average paper.

LOW:

An assignment that is evaluated as low contains sufficient errors to detract from the overall meaning. There are so many errors in sentence structure patterns and basic usage that the reader has difficulty interpreting what the writer means. Basic punctuation is omitted or haphazard, resulting in fragments, run-on sentences, etc. There are many spelling errors, particularly in often-used words.

Revised 10-86

PURPOSE

(Control of topic/awareness of audience)

High

1. Focus on a major point maintained
2. Awareness of and knowledge about audience demonstrated by
 - a) topic choice
 - b) language use
 - c) tone used
3. Consistent point of view
4. Clear intention
5. Goes beyond personal to make a point
5. Strategically placed ideas.

Middle

1. Writing drifts from major point
2. Awareness of or knowledge about audience not always clear.
 - a) topic not appropriate
 - b) language and tone unsuited
3. Shifting point of view
4. Intention present but vague
5. More personal than demonstrating larger purpose
6. Ideas not always strategically placed

Low

1. Little evidence of a point
2. No awareness of audience
 - a) clearly inappropriate topic, language and tone
3. Point of view unknown to reader
4. Lack of any intention
5. Remains at personal level--no point beyond personal
6. Random/unplanned placement of ideas

DIRECTION

(Organization)

High

1. Sense of beginning, middle and end
2. Interesting pattern of development
3. Transitions
 - a) smooth
 - b) creative
 - c) varied (use of transitional words/phrases, parallelism, pronouns, repetition, etc.)
4. Feeling that piece is a "whole"

Middle

1. Abrupt beginning, skimpy development, lack of closure
2. Safe, predictable (satisfying) pattern of development
3. Mechanical and/or redundant use of transitional devices
4. Feeling that something is "missing" in logical development

Low

1. No way of getting into subject, lack of any closure, no development
2. No pattern or sense of organization
3. Few or no transitions makes writing abrupt or choppy
4. Reader forced to invent ways of getting from point to point

IDEAS

(Originality, insight)

High

- Reader finds ideas in paper
1. convincing
 2. fresh
 3. supported by sufficient details
 4. illustrated by insightful details

Middle

- Reader finds ideas in paper
1. acceptable
 2. predictable
 3. supported by limited details
 4. uneven (some points well supported, others undeveloped)

Low

- Reader finds ideas in paper
1. few and unengaging
 2. distracting and inappropriate
 3. supported by too few details
 4. superficial and trite development of ideas

STYLE

(Inventiveness and manipulation of language)

High

1. Point of view demonstrated through use of pronouns maintained consistently and appropriate
2. Vocabulary (cliches only when consciously used, no deadwood)
3. Sentence structure varied, rhythmic, balanced, etc.
4. Diction rich, appropriate
5. Rhetorical devices (metaphor, rhetorical questions, allusions, etc.) used effectively

Middle

1. Some unwarranted shifts in point of view (pronoun usage)
2. Occasional use of cliches and padding
3. Sentence structure mostly S-V-O. Few new patterns of sentence development
4. Vocabulary limited, relying on colloquialisms
5. Unsuccessful attempt at rhetorical devices

Low

1. Obvious, unwarranted shifts in point of view (pronoun usage)
2. Stringing together of cliches and tired ideas, obvious padding
3. Sentences mostly primer style, sameness of structures
4. Noticeably deficient, repetitious, inappropriate vocabulary
5. Lack of any rhetorical devices or figurative language

PRESENTATION

(Correctness)

Four areas included are:

1. SENTENCE STRUCTURE (fragments, run-ons, sentence structure confused, length, complexity)
2. USAGE (s-v agreement, pronoun reference, modifiers, homonyms, verb tense, correct word choice)
3. MECHANICS (punctuation, capitalization, abbreviations, numbers)
4. SPELLING

High

1. Relatively error-free, especially in varied or complicated sentences
2. Few mistakes in usage
3. Errors obviously slips of pen
4. Misspellings only in hard-to-spell words

Middle

1. Occasional errors in parallelism, subordination patterns, etc.
2. Departures from usage that do not obscure meaning
3. Some violations of mechanics beyond slips of pen
4. Spelling errors usually found in "average" papers

Low

1. Sufficient errors in sentence structure and usage to make meaning hard for reader to find without rereading or pondering
2. Obvious departures from usage that call attention to themselves
3. Omitted or haphazard use of punctuation or capitals
4. Many spelling errors, especially in often-used words

TOPICS FOR ASSESSMENT
1986-87

4th Grade Assessment (given 1987)

All of us have favorite places to go to when we want to be alone. These places might be in our homes, yards, or neighborhoods, and we might go there to read, play, listen to music, or work on a hobby.

Describe one of your special places to a friend who has never seen it. You might want to tell your friend where the place is, what it looks like, why you like to go there, and what kinds of things you like to do there.

7th Grade Assessment (given 1987)

Being in the seventh grade means that you are probably very busy with school, sports, chores at home and extra-curricular activities or clubs. Yet seventh graders, like all people, need to escape from their responsibilities at times and relax. Some people "get away from it all" by reading, watching television, going to the movies, or working on a hobby. Some escape by retreating or going to a special place to relax.

Write an essay in which you describe your favorite place of escape or way of escaping. Be sure to describe what it is about that place or activity that makes it relaxing and enjoyable to you.

11th Grade Assessment (given 1986)

Locker 21, belonging to a student at your school, contains the following items:

- a Nike running shoe
- an application for an after-school job
- a TV program guide for the week
- a poster of a rock star
- a recruiting pamphlet from the armed services
- a mirror
- a chemistry textbook and class notes

An adult who wants to know what students in 1986 are like asks you whether the student who owns locker 21 is typical of the teen-agers you know. Using some or all of the items in the list above, draw some conclusions about this particular student's goals, activities, worries, interests, etc. and then explain to the adult in what ways he or she is representative of the students at your school.

NOTE: In drawing conclusions about this student, look for patterns or ways to group the items in the list above. You do NOT have to use all of the items on the list. You may, if you wish, add two items to the list.

To: Teachers of Eleventh Grade Students
From: Drs. Gratia Murphy and Gary Salvner,
Project Areté Directors

PROJECT ARETE
NOVEMBER 17, 1986
YOUNGSTOWN CITY SCHOOLS

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ADMINISTERING
ARETE WRITING TEST

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS:

1. The writing test you will administer will be given to about 1000 students in 5 city high schools. It is extremely important that all students receive the same directions and that conditions under which the students take the test are as close to being the same as possible. We ask that (when actually giving the test), you read aloud the instructions outlined in black on the next pages, and that you carefully follow the instructions regarding timing of the test.

2. Teachers are most influential in establishing the tone we want for this test. Please convey to the students the importance of their doing their best work. The information that will come back to them and their school based on their performance on this test will be very important to them. Students have a tendency to regard as "trivial" something that is not graded as usual; we hope that you will encourage their taking the task seriously.

3. Each student will receive a multiple-page form with individual pages labeled--each page is identified by a label in the top right corner. The only place the student's name appears is on the top sheet. PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT THE STUDENTS DO NOT WRITE THEIR NAMES ON THE OTHER SHEETS AND THAT ALL THE PAGES ARE KEPT STAPLED TOGETHER. Be sure, too, to distribute the test packet only to the student whose name appears on the top page.

4. Page 1 of the test contains important information. Make sure that all students fill it out completely. It asks for the teacher's name; it might be a good idea for you to put your name on the chalk board (to encourage correct spelling).

DIRECTIONS FOR ADMINISTERING THE TEST

1. Please give this test on two successive days, during the week of November 17. If a student is able to be in class only one day, mark an (x) with a red pen in the top right corner of the cover sheet indicating that this paper reflects only "one day's work." Please encourage students to try to be there for both days.

2. Distribute the test forms. Make sure each student has something to write with. We encourage pens; however, pencils will do. (It's a good idea to have a few pens/pencils on hand.)

3. Please caution students NOT TO REMOVE THE STAPLE FROM THE TEST PACKET. Restaple any that come apart.

4. There should be no need for additional space for writing. However, if an additional page is added, be sure to have the student put the CODE NUMBER ONLY--NOT THE NAME--at the top of the page and staple that page to the packet.

DISTRIBUTE TEST PACKETS TO STUDENTS

READ THESE DIRECTIONS ALOUD

DAY 1

1. Please do not take the test packet apart. You must hand in all your sheets. We will fill out the top sheet of the test form first. Print your name on the first line. Put your last name first, then your first name, then middle initial. Print on the lines below the name of your high school and your teacher.

2. Do not open your test packet yet. Listen carefully as I give you directions on the writing you will do. I will not repeat the directions.

All of the juniors in the Youngstown City Schools are participating in this writing project. You will be asked to write an essay that will be read by teachers from these high schools. Later this year you will receive valuable information about your writing skills.

You will be writing the first draft of your essay in class today. At the end of the writing period today, you will turn your essay in to your teacher. Tomorrow, during class, you will have your essay returned and you will have twenty minutes to revise your writing, to change it, and to make it better in any way you can.

3. Now open the packet to the first page, headed "Writing Topic--Grade Eleven." Read the writing assignment to yourself.

(PAUSE TO ALLOW ALL STUDENTS TO READ DIRECTIONS.)

Are there any questions about what you are to do?... You will probably want to spend a few minutes thinking about your topic or jotting down ideas. You may use the reverse side of the cover sheet for making your notes. You will have 35 minutes to write the first draft of your essay.

YOU MAY BEGIN NOW.

(ALLOW STUDENTS 35 MINUTES FOR WRITING.)

4. The time is up now. Please close your packets and pass them to me.

RETURN TEST PACKETS TO STUDENTS

READ THESE DIRECTIONS ALOUD

DAY 2

1. Today you will get back the essays you wrote yesterday. You will have twenty (20) minutes to make any changes you wish to make in your essay. You will want to read over what you wrote yesterday and decide for yourself if you want to change anything, add anything, or take anything out. You will also want to edit your writing to make it as correct as you can and to proofread it carefully. This twenty (20) minutes is an opportunity for you to make your essay as well-written as possible.

2. You may wish to make changes directly on the essay you wrote yesterday. However, if you make any changes, you will probably want to copy your essay over. If you do, draw a double line across the page after the part you wrote yesterday and put your new copy below that line. Use the reverse side of the second page if you need to.

3. Your essay will not be judged on neatness alone; however, the readers will have to be able to read what you have written.

(ALLOW STUDENTS 20 MINUTES FOR REVISION.)

(PLEASE STOP WRITING. PASS IN YOUR PAPERS.)

FINAL NOTE TO TEACHERS:

Please put test papers of all your classes together in numerical order, lowest number on top.

Bundle them securely and give all completed tests to the Department Chair immediately following the last day of testing.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION!

4th GRADE ANCHOR PAPERS

TRAIT: PURPOSE

Level: High

I like to go in my back yard behind the red barn. It is at the end of our property. Behind it is woods and then a cornfield. Its quiet and pretty back there. I like to just sit there and think and relax.

It is not big but its not too small. Wild flowers and rasberry grow back there. Sometimes my cat would come back with me and play. I like to go there because my mom and friends don't know that I am there. I also like it there because I can day dream all I want.

I like to go there because its fun to alone. But sometimes I'd rather be with Julie. I also like to go there so I can be what I want to be and do what I want to do. I like to sit there and eat the rasberry while I relax. It is fun to make up your own game or play. I think about Julie when I'm up there sometimes! I love it back there when the rabbits and birds are there. I like it when the wind blows and the trees sway back and forth. Sometimes I feel that the trees and animals can talk to me or do talk to me. I sometimes think that I am a prince and set all the world free from war. I love it back there cause I can go into the woods (just a little bit) and make trailes.

It's the funnest, quiest, prettiest place in my yard.

--Jim

Level: Medium

My special places are in my bedroom at my grandmothers house upstairs in the bedroom and down the street from my grandmother is the edge of a cliff.

Where my special places is in my house, (bedroom) and down the street from my grandmother (cliff).

What my bedroom looks like is that it is white and has rainbow Erite. My other special place it is out side it as a rail across it when you look down you can see the city.

I like to go there because I can talk prifit and stay away from everybody.

What kinds of things is play games, look, play write, play school play with my friends there.

I picked this place because it is special, I can do whatever I wont to do there like, dig, sweep, the cliff is like there is a road that lead to that and it stops at a rail and I can pick flowers, grow things there (cliff.) About my room is I can play, sleep, daydream, write.

My special places are nice to me because ever sense I was 5 years old I wanted my own room and finally I got it when I was 9 years old. I could not wait for it because I was so happy. But know I think I can mess it up. The cliff is hard but this is how it happend. Once my sister and I had to get away from my cousin and brother so we took a walk around the block but still we could not find nothing. So we split up and my sister found this place and this is our hidout. But sometimes people are play basketball and we can not go down there but it is all wright.

But sometime I hope I can take someone in my secert hiding places and show them that you would really enjoy it. In the swmer I feel good about this place.

--Sue

TRAIT: PURPOSE

Level: Low

My favorite place to go is to my room. Sometimes I color, take a nap, or play with my stuffed animals. My brother or father come in then I will just sit there. When its time to eat I only eat a littel then. I have the room all to myself again. When supper's over I uselly come out. When I get board agian I go back into my room. If I really get board I go outside. My dog will want me to play with him or pet him. We'll play ball or chase or I'll pet him and he'll lick me to death. He relly makes me happy. Then a car will pull in the driveway then he'll come running up. He has been known for biting people. I'll have to hold him back. Finaly they would leave and he'll stop barking and jumping at them. When my cousins ride thier ddirt bikes he'll start barking and chasing them. When it gets dark I go in take a bath and say to myself "Tomorrow's another day!"

--Beth

TRAIT: DIRECTION

Level: High

Shh! I only tell my special friends about this. I'm going to tell you where my special place is. You have to swear not to tell anybody, OK? Good.

Well here it is. What's that? You say you don't see it? Why it's right there, behind the couch. What do you mean what's so special about it? To me it's wonderful because it's quiet, comfy, and if you poke your head out you can see TV.

I go there almost everyday. What's that? You want to know why I go here? Well mostly to be alone. I espesuly go there to do my homework.

Do you know what makes it so interesting? It's location! Yes really. Why? That's easy. You see I can sneak in and out without anyone seeing me, watch t.v., listen to the radio, and do homework.

Do you know how I keep it private? I drape blankets over the openings. Well just one more thing to tell you, I What! You say I inspired you to make a special place? Wow! Someday I'll come over and you can show me you're special place.

--Tom

Level: Medium

I like to go in my room. I like my room. I have to share with my brother. I like to go to my room for anything I do hobbies, listen to music, read, do my homework and just to relax. I do models up in my room and watch TV in my room.

In my room there are trophies that I won and things that I like to do. My favorite thing to do is draw. I like to draw people, places, cars, tanks, and lots more.

My room is the place to go when I just want to go and think about what I want to draw and think about what there is to do. I like to look out the window and look at the birds and trees and all the things God made and the fresh air and all the animals the flowers and many other things. My bedroom is the place I want to go when I sleep. My bedroom is where I like to be.

--John

TRAIT: DIRECTION

Level: Low

I like to go to Paradise Lake. Paradise Lake is a nice campground to go to.

It has playgrounds, a swimming pool, a store that has food and candy, and a Dairy queen, and bingo, and a hayride.

I like to ride around Paradise by myself on my tenspeed.

It also has a place where you can play games like pac-man, and donkey kong and lots of other games.

The one thing I don't like is sometimes people hassle you around.

They have a like to fish in. I like that the best almost.

One time they had a fishing derby to see who could catch the most fish.

Once they put new fish in the lake and you couldn't fish for a long time. They put three tagged fish in the lake to win money if you caught it.

I think Paradise is a nice place. If you went there you would like it to.

But you would like Cooks forset to because it has more stuff then Paradise like you can rid horses, gocarts, go swimming, play games like pac-man and donkey kong, go hiking, go fishing, boating, and their's no trouble about bossing there, and a store, playgrounds, and lots, lots, lots more.

--Ralph

TRAIT: IDEAS

Level: High

My favorite place to go is right in my own yard its just a tree it has a swing on it. Its my favorite because I can climb the tree or just swing on the swing. I like to make up games on the swing like see how far I can jump off and act like I am a high fling acrobat and do tricks on it like hanging upside down while the swing swings and things like that. I sometimes bring out my radio and just swing and sometimes I'll make up a opposite counter and time myself. Or sometime I'll bring out a drink and a snak and a blanket and lay down ond have a picnic. Or I'll bring a book out and read. Or I'll bring out my cabbge patch kids and put them on the swing and push them. Or take pictures of them on the swing. Or play like I am at a carnavaal and working at a Gaint swing ride and make the swing go wild. Sometimes I act like I am in a contest to see who can go the highest I always make myself win of course. Or I would act like I am jumping hurdle. Or sometimes I like to just swing and think about things.

Some times I act like I am teaching class and teach people to do tricks. Like the one I mentioned before, hanging upside down while swinging. Or teach them to climb up the rope of the swing.

My Dad made the swing for me last year because my swing set fell apart. And I think that the swing I have now is funner than the swing set. Because there is more things to do on the swing as you heard. All I have to do is use my imagenation that all thats easy for me because I have a very good imagenation. And thats true. Because of all the things I do on the swing.

--Peter

TRAIT: IDEAS

Level: Medium

When I want to be alone I go up in my tree. There is a special spot up there that I can go to when I want to be alone. It is 40 feet high and only I can go there no one else can climb that high. I like to go up trees that's because I like the wind blowing the tree back and forth every one else gets stomach aches. There is one spot in the tree where the branches stick out everywhere so all you have to do is sit in the bran in the middle and the rest of the branches hold you in so you don't have to worry about anything. I like to go up there with airplane models and I build them. One time when I was only 4 I threw a little matchbox car and a little metal airplane out of the tree and it landed on the garage and it is still there today. Once there was a little nest up in the tree my brother wanted to climb to the top and get it but he was too small and I left it alone. One time I was hanging on a branch and it started to crack I swung of it on to another brance. One time I went to the top of my tree and you could see the whole block. Once I was playing hide and seek and I was it. I climbed to the top of my tree and saw most of the kids. They were hiding in bushes and behind the garage. I got down quietly and tagged almost all of them. One time I was in the tree and my brothers sandbox was at the bottom I jumped of and landed in the sand, ugh! it was all wet and saggy! One time it had just rained and the branches were slippery and I slipped and fell and almost broke my leg!! Once I was back there in my tree I saw a cat it didn't look to good it looked like it didn't get up on the right side of the bed that morning. I guess I scared it away because it just ran away and didn't come back up again.

--Barbara

Level: Low

By my woods in devils creak becaus I like to ride my four wheeler back there boy is it fun I like it if you were back there you'd like it to. I'm telling you that four wheelers are the most funest things to ride just wonder if you were back there you would realy have fun jumping them high hills you would love it it is fun beleav me it is great just think we can go to my plaza and we can go see a movie at the show to go see rad that movie is a blast beleave me man it is cool man you should see it man it is cool man it is cheap to get in but the only pain in the but is the candie it is exspencive that is the pits. I'm telling you it is but in steede I go to hills to get my candie it is fun just think we can go see bruce spring stean that is fun you would in joy it it is fun beleave me man it is cool man you'd like it and we can go home and we can pack a lunch and and then we can go to my hide out and eat there and then we can go riding again and then after we get all wswety we can go back to my house and go swimming to wash the swet of us and then we will stay up and whatch some movies on my vcr and then well make some popcorn and then we will go to bed and then we will get up around 5:00 in the morning and we will go riding agian. by

--Oscar

I have a place where I like to go to be alone. It is in the woods behind my backyard. There is a special tree I like to sit under because it has cool shade under it's yellow green leaves in the summer and in the fall I like to sit under it and look at it's pretty golden leaves. I go there mostly to get away from my aggravating family, but sometimes I go there just for fun! When I go there I usually reead or do crafts, such as cross-stich, knitting, to crochet, or to make a hook-rug, or potholders. I have a piece of wood to serve as a chair and a larger piece of wood to serve as a table. It is a nice place to go expectally to be alone because it is quiet. I really like to go there.

--Janet

My favorite place to go is downstairs under the table. Thats my favorite because it has a table cloth and is dark so I get a flash light to read. I always bring my dog with me and she lays down. The table is my hiding place when I play hide-an-go-seek, it's also my hide out to hide when my sister goes upstairs and comes back down. When I sit down and read sometimes I get scared so before anybody sees me I get out to go upstairs. My sister has never saw it before. I hope she never finds out. If she does then I have another place but I don't want to tell you about it right now. When I go to my place I don't always read I listen to music but it isn't to loud it's soft. It has always been my favorite place since I was three years old. I always like to have a place when I don't want anybody around me. When it storms in the spring and I get scared upstairs I come downstairs to go under the table. I always try to hide under the kitchen table but my sister finds me. The table cloth is nice and big with big flowers on it. I won't be able to hide in it in the summer because it's an umberela table.

--Byron

I have a very speichel place it is my shed. It is very quiet. I love to read. It is very full of light. It has a very nice chair and table. I just like to go and enjoy the peace and quiet. In the shed I also like to draw. I have crayons and paits in the shed. Sometimes a very good friend will come over and play. At night sometimes I like to look at the stars by the hole in the roof. And sometimes I play music. And sometimes I dance with the music I play. It is fun when I am all alone. Because it will be my shed to me and me alone. Someday I might name my shed. But right now my shed is called shed. Who knows what I might call it so before I name it I will ask my friends what they think of the name.

--Caroline

TRAIT: PRESENTATION

Level: High

When I want to be alone, I often go in a neat, secret place. In this place I draw pictures and write songs. These are just two of my most favorite hobbies. This is the description I of my favorite place: bark chips for the floor, a rock or two for chairs, a couple trees and bushes for shade, flowers to decorate, and not one thing more. This little place is located off to the side of my back porch. Usually I'm not disturbed, but if someone comes to ask a question or to tell me something, I answer the question, do what I might have to do, and get back to my work once again.

I like to draw pictures of animals realistic or fantasy. Most of the animals featured in my pictures are animals found in my wildest dreams in the most exotic places! One of my favorite things to draw is a sunset. I make just the image of the animals.

I do songwriting by dreams. If I dream a really neat dream I write about it and make a song. I can't reach high

--Andrew

Level: Medium

I like to go to the tree in my back yard. And climb up in it. It is very tall and bushy and it has a limb in it. When I go I get in the tree. I like play checkers with a friend. If we don't play checkers or mmople we spy on someone or something. One time a friend and I were playing spy. We had a pair of bonachels spying on my neighbor until she left. Then my friend fell out of the tree. He wasn't hurt to bad. Then we got the rope ladder and climbed up again but this time alot higher. When we got to the top, we picked acornes and threw them on my cousin. He threw rocks at us but didn't hit us. I dropped a whole lot of acornes on him all at the same time. But then we climbed back down the ladder.

--Hildegard

Level: Low

It is in the neighborhood. It is nice their. You would like it their it fun. It is Pink and Blue. If you would like to go their it would be fun. You could bring any one you want. I like to listen to music and read play and lots more you could play house in it. I have some closte in it is just like a house. It is fun to play in it. I could put too bikes in it and we would have fun. I could put some rolly skates in it. Would you like that.

--Rick

7th GRADE ANCHOR PAPERS

TRAIT: PURPOSE

Level: High

When I want to relax, I read. Reading can be very exciting, hilarious, and fun. There are all sorts of books and many are very interesting.

When I read, I feel like I'm in another world. The books I read keep me in suspense, wondering what will happen next! As I read on, I get absorbed in the book and I never want to put it down.

Books also take you into different times. Each book has a different setting, so if you really enjoy the book, you feel like your right there taking place and participating in the story. You also feel like you are friends with the characters.

If you pick the right books, you won't be sorry. Books are there to entertain and to teach. Reading can help you in many different ways. If you and everyone else just read, even small books, you'll understand what I mean.

--Amy

Level: Medium

My favorite thing to do when I am under a lot of pressure is to jog around the block a few times. I like jogging because it is good for you and it helps you relax your muscles after a long day. When you run as often as I do it becomes a habit. I'll usually run about two or three miles a day. When you feel under tremendous pressure, you run with a steadier pace and you go farther faster. I run down roads and paths that aren't busy. What's best is when I run on these roads, the scenery is really relaxing which makes it even more enjoyable. Since I'm in track at my school, I've learned how I should run and ways to make it better for me. Posture and the way you move your arms are very important. If you really know how to jog the correct way, it makes you feel more relaxed. You really shouldn't eat right before you run, but if you need to, make sure you eat light. Candy and granola bars are a quick source of energy, but unfortunately it only lasts for a short time. I like to run right after I get home or even later: before 5:00. I've never ran at night before, but I guess it wouldn't hurt to try! The thing you really have to watch is the temperature outside. I hardly ever run when its too hot or too cold. You can get exhausted or sick. Jogging is really a relaxing thing for me when I'm under strain or pressure or just upset about something. It takes your mind off of all your troubles. Jogging really makes me feel good.

--Max

TRAIT: PURPOSE**Level: Low**

I like to go to the lake and be with people I know. When I am there I do a lot of fishing in the creek and on the lake. Fishing is a good way for me to get away from it all, I also like to go for rides on the big tractor up at the camp, but some time we mess up the grass then one time we went for a ride in the car, when the adults we away for a walke.. then we got stuck in the mud, so we got the tractor and pulled the car out by hooking a caple to the fraunt of the car and to the back of the tractor. then puttled it out. One time my dads friand dog fell in the creek when it just got done raining.

So we had to go and get the dog out before it died but it was kind of funny.

On the way to the lake we go and see the big ships that carry cargo across the lake. When we are fishing we see far away a big ship coming in the port, it looks small when it is coming in but when it gets here it is so big you could hardly belive it.

On the way home we always stop at the ice cream place and get ice cream then we stop at the yankey lake motor cross, the lase was drained then thay built a motorcorss. For a while.

Then we unload the car and talk about how much fun we had

This is how I like to escap from my chors, school ect.

--Jill

TRAIT: DIRECTION**Level: High**

I love to have some time to relax and I can relax easy with my favorite people my grandparents. My grandparents live on a farm which up until this year had animals. I really enjoy going there and it is easy for me to relax there for many reasons.

The first reason I like to go there is because after I was born my parents and I lived in a trailer in the apple orchard, because of this when I'm there I like to sit on the swing in the orchard and look back over good things. I also can look at pictures that tell stories of when I was small. Stories that are too old to remember.

My second reason is because my grandparents are wise and sweet and he is always telling me stories that tell a lesson or are just to make me happy. He loves to be with me and I love to be with him. He takes me hiking or teaches me about things that seem to always help me. Then my grandmother she likes to go out of her way to make me happy. She bakes with me and she can crochet and sew. She also tells me about my family history.

There are many other small reasons why I like to be with my grandparents at their house, one reason is that I can go for a walk without having to worry about being kidnapped or something. Another reason is that there are so many little places to go. It seems as though there is always something to do between riding tractors, mowing the lawn, climbing trees, picking fruit, going on nature walks or even just sitting under a tree to daydream.

The farm is almost like a very old person. It can tell you stories of the past just like our photo album. It seems so peaceful, loving, and quiet. I guess that's why it is so very special to me.

Even though the farm is physically drifting away, it will always spiritually be there for me. --Candace

TRAIT: DIRECTION

Level: Medium

My favorite place to escape is at my grandfather's house. He lives out in the country. The back yard is huge. It has a pond in the back. My favorite thing is the woods.

I also like to just stroll through the woods. I see lots of small animals. All the birds chirping makes me feel a lot better. When I am in the woods I love to think about the future.

My favorite is the cabin. It has bunkbeds so my friends and I can camp back there. We have a camp fire and tell ghost stories it is fun. I guess nature is the way for me to escape.

--Charlie

Level: Low

Everytime I get home from school I have to do my homework. I watch or usually watch T.V. to relax. I have to do many chores to help my parents. Sometime I wish to go to many places to get away from my homework and chores. Some places where I would like to be are Chicago, Indiana, and Florida. Also I would very much like to be in Italy. Chicago is where my cousins live. We would do many things, and go to many places to pass time. In Indiana is where my best friend lives. She was my friend when we were real little. Her name is Kim. She would show me her new house and she would probably take me to her aunts house to swim in their huge swimming pool. Florida is a good place to go. Its nice weather and to spend most of my time swimming and making new friends. My final place is Italy. I think I should bring my family this time so we all could learn the culture and the way it is down there. We would learn new things and maybe even buy a few things from Italy to show and tell our relatives and friends. I wish this could be true. I would help or save me from my homework and my chores.

--Mary

TRAIT: IDEAS

Level: High

Two seconds on the clock! The score is deadlocked at 102-102. This is the seventh and deciding game of the NBA World Championship, I'm on the foul line preparing for my hopeful winning shot. Since we're playing at the Boston Garden the crowd is on their feet in a frenzy. The ball is in the air it's going . . .

Wake up son. You have to go to school!

This is what I do. I spend most of my time playing basketball at a near-by court or dreaming of what someday I wish to be doing. I play basketball when ever my schedule allows me. While I play I dream and put myself in the situations I hope to be in.

I attend to be a Rhode-Scholar, while attending law school. Then I will play two or three seasons in the N.B.A. Then retiring and practice law before going into politics at the national level.

This life is full, but I attend on making my dream true. Although I mentioned many areas of when I want to explore I'm keying on basketball for now. It relaxes me and hleps me get some of a 7th graders problem out of my mind. I enjoy getting into the freshness of nature

while I play. The brisk, but easily controllable breeze cools me in the blistering hot July day. I also very often play with my friends which helps me socialize and occasionally meet new friends. Basketball serves many purposes to me. So far I have been fortunate, health wise, to be able to play, I hope it continues.

By the way I made the shot!

--Mark

TRAIT: IDEAS

Level: Medium

As a seventh grader, I sometimes become very busy. To escape from it all, I like to go in the woods. In the dark, damp center of these woods there is a large old oak tree next to a gurgling, rushing river.

It is kind of interesting because there is only one pathway to this lonely tree, since it lies next to a river and around it are many impenetrable thorns and brush. Once you get there, however you can relax and think about things, either, next to the river or in the tree.

It is also a nice place because almost no one ever goes in that section of the woods or even knows where the tree is!

I would tell you where it was, but that would spoil the great secret. When I'm done there I can go home or to school or do whatever I have to do.

--Floyd

Level: Low

One thing I like to do when I relax is reading. The way I like to read is outside in the sun or in the hours in my bedroom. The position I like to read in is lying down on my back. It seems to me that it is much harder to read in a sitting position.

The best kind of book that I like to read is mostly mysteries but sometimes I like to read love stories. I do a lot of reading and it has sort of become my hobby. I used to watch a lot of T.V. but now I'm mostly run here and there and now it seems that I'm never home. At night I usually go to bed a half-hour or 45 minutes before I have to go to sleep. This is sort of funny but I don't care much for reading at school. At home I'm just the opposite. At night my mom usually gets mad because I won't stop reading and go to sleep.

Like I said before reading has become one of my best loved hobbies.

The End

--Gail

TRAIT: STYLE

Level: High

Sometimes the world seems like it's spinning to fast for me, and I need a place to escape form it all. When I feel like this I go to Fathering Woods, where I can leave the materal word behind me and explor my heart. The woods are small but it is the last real beauty left in the world. We live in a time of steel and concrete. But it's nice to know I have someplace to go to feel complete.

Fathering Woods is not one place. Fathering Woods is every forest and place where nature is untouched by human destruction. No one who hasn't been there can never know or understand the beauty of it. They couldn't understand the peacefull silence of the night. Or could they imagine how it feels when the dawn breaks through the night and the sun peers through the trees. When I'm in the woods I feel like nothing else matters. I go there to be alone with my thoughts and to see what one day might not be.

I love the woods in a way no one else can, even when I'm away from the forest, my heart beats faster when I just think of it. No matter where I go in the world, or what becomes of me, I will always return to Fathering Woods.

--Amanda

Level: Medium

My favorite place to escape to is an old washed away land bridge back in the thicket of woods. There is a spot beside it that was cleared out and three enormous telephone poles that were made from trees that were cut down years ago. Back there I can think, throw stones into the water or climb a tree and watch a racoon washing his food, a beaver gathering twigs to build a dam or watch deer play and run about, stopping every once in a while to get a dring of refreshing cool water.

In spring it is beautiful to see the trees budding and all the newborn animals. In summer you can see right to the bottom of the creek and gaze off into a green mist of leaves. In fall it is especially beautiful with the leaves changing to auburn, yellow, and brown. In winter the sound of running water under the ice creates a chirp like none other known to man.

This place is my own world. If anything were to happen to it I would be lost forever. I wouldn't be able to find a place as beautiful, relaxing and pleaceful place in the world. Nothing would come close to it.

--Cheryl

Level: Low

My most favorite place to relax is in my bedroom because it is quite and peaceful I can just sit on my bed and fall asleep or watch tv and I can do my homework in my bedroom to.

In the morning when I have to get up for school I don't want to get out of bed because I am so confortable but still I have to get up and than I think when I get home from school I can come up stairs and sit in my bedroon and watch tv and forget all of my troubles.

--Joe

TRAIT: PRESENTATION

Level: High

The favorite place of mine, which I like to escape to, is by a little pond in the woods near my house.

There I can see the clear water without any movement, except from the cool breeze.

There are beautiful flowers surrounding it, which make my day more enjoyable. The flowers remind me of my three little sisters. The flowers seem to have a smile on their petals, like my sisters have a smile on their faces.

Another thing that makes me relaxed is watching the birds and other animals, chasing each other. The animals don't seem to mind that I'm there. They seem to be in their own little world.

One day I may show this favorite place of mine to my sisters, and hopefully when they want to go somewhere to relax they will choose this place and enjoy it just as much as I do.

--Betsy

Level: Medium

One of my favorite places to escape is my bedroom because nobody but Mom and Dad can come in. I like it up there it is nice & peaceful it's not noisy. I go when my brother plays his trumpet. What I do up there is lay in bed and relax sometimes I turn on the T.V. on and fall asleep. Another one of my places to escape is my clubhouse sit up in it do repairs if it needs it. Help to improve it like if boards are loose I fix them It's nice it's far of the ground so nobody can see me. It is fun to jump down. I like it up in my clubhouse The best place is when I go fishing it is so peaceful sitting in the chair not a noise in the world if you go to the right spot.

--Candace

Level: Low

I like to go places in my truck with my father because it's an old truck because people like to look at it and it's an old 54 Dodge, I think it's fun to ride in an old truck. I had an elbow on the tail gate that was a Dodge, and me and him help some people how have car problems like his friend, now all we need is vent window. I wish I would still be able to go with my grandfather to the mine I would like to be able to go with him my mother made me a lunch and I would go with him but his boss said that I couldn't come with him because if I fell and got hurt I could lose him but wouldn't I'm going to ask him if I could go the last day my grandfather goes to work for good old time sake.

--Jason

SENIOR HIGH ANCHOR PAPERS

TRAIT: PURPOSE

Level: High

Actually like "Cabbage Patch Kids", no two students are alike. However, there are certain likenesses we all share. Based on the information that I have been given, I have drawn several conclusions....

You mentioned a "Nike" running shoe. "Nike" is a popular brand of footwear that is worn by many students today, but I cannot say many student keep just a single "Nike" running shoe in their lockers. I prefer to be original, I wear "Converse", two of them!

Next you said there was an application for an afterschool job found. Many students have jobs, or would like to apply for one. So, I would say this is typical of the modern-day student.

Then, you said you found a T.V. program guide for the week. I consider this typical, for the fact that "T.V." is one of America's favorite "pass-times." Besides, students usually will take some form of "outside publication to read in a class or studyhall at school.

You have also found a poster of a "rock star." "Rock-n-Roll", which originated in the "50's", is still one of today's heaviest influences on teen-age life. Most of the students here have some sort of a picture, or poster of a personality in "rock", or some other sort of media.

Next, you found a recruiting pamphlet from the armed services. Many students have almost a "natural interest" in warfare. Some students wish to join a service as an only hope for higher schooling. While others wish to join because it is an "In thing to do," or to "show-off" their patriotism.

I understand that you have also found a mirror. Many students like to keep a neat image, so I would say this is very typical of students here.

Finally, You said that you have found a chemistry textbook and classnotes. These are the most representative items a student would have. Emphasis is often placed on science, and to pass nearly any subject, a student must take notes. I certainly do.

--Wendy

Level: Medium

The person who owns locker 21 is both typical and non-typical of students in 1985. Most teenagers of today are not looking ahead in their life until someone really suggests it to them. It seems like they don't want to deal with actual life out of high school. Students don't start looking for colleges and jobs until they are seniors in high school. This is wrong because you need time to think of what you want to do with your life. Students should start thinking about their future much earlier.

The student who owns locker 21 must have alot of free time after school or he wouldn't be applying for a job. This job, if he gets it, might just make him get poorer grades than what he is used to getting. He has a chemistry book and notes also. This is not an easy course, and

you must spend time without of class as well as in the class. This part is typical of teenagers in 1985. They have to put their priorities in order. School is more important than an after school job.

Teen-agers watch alot of free time T.V. There is no doubt that when most teen-agers get home from school they hit the T.V. button and off they go into T.V. land. But having a TV program guide in your locker is pretty far fetched. If you took a poll of how many students had T.V. program guides in their lockers this number would be drastically low. This is not very typical of a student have a T.V. program guide in their locker, but it is very typical of a teen-ager watching alot of T.V.

Students in 1985 also have pretty big egos. Everyone walks around thinking they're better than the other guy. If a person would be caught with a mirror in their locker that could be trouble. People might call him gay or other obsenities. So having a mirror in their locker is very unlikely because students in 1985 care what other people think of them. The music industry today is just raking in the teen-agers. There are so many albums coming out that people don't know what to do with. Sell them to the teen-agers. Many rock groups today base their music on the teen-agers point of view. So whatever the teen-age craze is, that is what rock groups sing. Most of the time the music isn't the best. Such as it might sound as if the person is just yelling instead of singing. But teens buy this music because the harder the music the cooler you are. So a poster of a rock singer would be very typical of the 1985 teen-agers.

In many ways this student is both typical and non-typical of teen-agers in 1985. If this were my locker you would probably find the chemistry book and notes and other subjects. You wouldn't find all that other garbagef in my locker that's for sure like a mirror and a poster of a rock star. I'm not saying an application for a job is bad, it's just that school should be more important because I doubt that you will have your job that you had in high school as your career.

--John

TRAIT: PURPOSE

Level: Low

The student who has locker twenty-one is probably a very with it person, because of the rock star poster which was hung on the inside of his locker door. The star on the poster is of Bruce Sprinsteen This student is a student with goals and dreams, he wants to be someone in our society. So he decided he wanted to join the arm forces. To be exact he wanted to join the Army, because he said that he like the clothes they wore (green and brown yuk!) The boy in locker twenty one is probably quit intelligent, since he is taking chemistry. Chemistry is a very tough class. You can not be a dumby to take it and pass it. By the boy making an effort to have a job after shcool again means that he has set high goals for himself which he will probably reach.

There is another side to this boy in locker twent-one He is still a fun loving go gettum guy. He has a mirror in his locker, that must mean he really cares about his apparence. But it really means that he probably has a girlfriend who he want to look great for and impress. I bet my life that this boy in locker twenty one is an athelet of some type. It seems that only athelets have smelly, old, dirty tennis shoes

in their lockers. Especially a nike tennis shoe. A nike tennis shoe represent an athelet. The shoe proves that you only buy the best. There is another item in his locker which proves he is a high shcool student in our society. It is a T.V. guide for this weeks television programs. He has to work his life and homework around the television shows which he is going to watch for the week.

The boy in this locker is an all American kid with dreams and goals set for himself. This locker contents represents a typical high school student locker in this time period. There is only one thing missing from this locker and it is the mess of old, used, notebook paper and his old smelly lunches which he did not eat and left them laying around.

--Gary

TRAIT: DIRECTION

Level: High

In being locker 21 at this high school I have seen many students come and go. In recalling the student who had me in 1985, I can remember many interesting things about him. He wasn't a particullarly neat person. His notebooks were always thrown into me, crumpled and ripped. I hated when he left his smelly Nike shoes in me after basketball practice. I got my revenge though by storing up the smell for the next day. He was a pretty good student, although I not sure how. He was so disorganized. Schoolwork always came last on the list. He'd rather watch T.V, listen to the radio, or go out with his friends than actually take home the chemistry book that had not been touched since the first day of school.

Although not the model student, he was very concerned with his future. He ws always reading pamphlets on the armed services. Once he wrote an application for an after school job. I don't think he ever really gave it to the company though.

Towards the end of the year he started to change. He became more concerned with school than ever before. I was surprised when the chemistry book ws taken home. He must of stopped watching T.V. too because I never saw the program guide anymore. The poster of his favorite rock star stayed, however I guess he could never change completely.

Another change came about towards to end of the year, he got a girlfriend. That's when the mirror went up. He'd never been concerned about the way he looked before she came along. I can still remember her coming over to see him every period of the day. Once they had a huge fight. He slammed me and his mirror shattered into a million pieces. He cleaned me up though and I appreciated it.

He was a pretty nice kid to have my locker. I suppose out of all the years, he's my favorite. Some kids are just plain too boring and some are too disrespectful to me. This student was different; he had class. I wish all the people who had me for a locker were like him. Maybe next year?

--Abigail

TRAIT: DIRECTION

Level: Medium

The items in the above locker are common things you would find in a typical teen-ager's locker. Some of the things may seem silly to you but they're really not.

The application for an after school shows that the student is willing to be independent, and give up his spare time to work for things he really wants. People come down on the teen population now a days. If people would only look deeper they would find responsible teens.

In this students locker you see a mirror. Adults think it is probbalely stupid. The idea of having a mirror isn't stupid because a person has to have a freindly, confident, and responsible appearence to be a sucess in an office, so why not in school.

You as an adult can't understand why teens have things such as rock posters hanging in a locker. Teens hang them for a better, more likable atmosphere. In offices people have things up for decorations, teens just have rock posters of decorations. You say sure hang something cheriful up, but not a rock poster. We as teens look up and relate to the rock stars of today as you probbaly looked up to Elvis, or who ever you liked.

A typical student does have things such things as books and notes. I know you find it hard to beleive that teens come to school to learn. Not every teenager comes to school to cut classes and fool around. There are many teens who are devoted and serious about their school work.

Yes, all of the items could be found in a typical teens locker. So the next time you see a teen in high school, don't this he's a person with no hopes or dreams, but a person with pride, confidence and a rock-n-Roll poster hanging in his locker.

--Penny

Level: Low

A rock poster would show what kind of music he likes. He would use a mirror in his locker because he worries about what he looks like. A chemistry textbook will show us that he is eager to learn and ready to study and to learn everything given to him. A tennis shoe would that either he's athletic or in style. An application for an after school job shows that he is wants to earn money. Either to go out on weekends or for to start saving for further education. A recruiting pamphlet might be that he doesnt know what he wants to do. (Job or armed services). This kid would probably be very good looking very smart and very neat. Very well dressed, in style. He's not confused and probably easily forced into things he doesn't want to do.

--Susan

TRAIT: IDEAS

Level: High

You have finished examining the contents of locker 21, now you ask me if this locker represents a typical teenager? First, how can simple objects, common objects, represent anyone, whether typical or atypical? In order to answer this question, one must first examine the objects, inferring or drawing conclusions in a logical manner. Then the running shoe. There is only one, which leads me to two conclusions: either 1) the student is absent-minded enough to go an entire day wearing only one shoe, or 2) in a courageous act of self-sacrifice, he saved his baby brother by pulling him out the path of an approaching lawn mower, losing his other foot in the process--hence the need for only one shoe. The job application shows that, as adults continually preach, we can always find ways of wasting out time. I find a streak of masochistic perversion in the presence of a TV Guide--watching the program is enough to make one a lobotomy candidate, but to read about them as well?

The next three items, poster, pamphlet, and mirror, suggest, perhaps, that the owner is looking for hero-leadership, whether in the prancing of an entertainment idol whether by achieving stardom or saving the country in the stricter enforcements of the armed service. He wants to be somebody, and perhaps he uses the mirror as an indicator of where he's going. Two items which you overlooked, the tacky plastic flamingo and inflatable palm tree on the upper shelf, show that this person does have a sense of humor--trying to beautify a drab environment with something he knows is even uglier. Finally, the chemistry books and nntoes, hastily scribbled, rudely shoved to the back, show the intrusion of reality that sometimes pervades the fantasy world of high school. The work, hated, despised, must still be done, however much he would like to forget it all.

So, these objects, symbols, maybe, of absent-mindedness, irresponsibility, waste, goal reaching, vanity, a sense of perspective and creativity and finally, rationality, are they expressive of a typical teenager? First, before I answer, tell me what is a typical teenager? We are all akin in these same qualities--teenagers and adults alike--we are all vain, irresponsible, creative, heroic, and bumbling fools. None of us are typical, or we'd be nothing but clones, with the same values, same faults, same perfections, and the objects in locker 21 show this. Of course, they could just be a show, an application, a magazine, poster, and ugly statue. After all, it's not my locker is it?

--Ann

Level: Medium

The student who owns locker 21 is kinda a student from the 1985 category of students. There are many kinds of students but in this case I think the person who owns locker 21 is a average student. His student goals seem to be adjustable, he has an application for an after school job, which shows he is tring but doesn't seem to try quit hard enough because its still in his locker. A t.v. program guide should diffently tell you he watchs T.V. too much and not enough work on his studies. The student has a mirror and a pair of Nike running shoes which obviously shows he is a jock (or a person who is always involved in sports) the mirror is for his own personal use so that might mean he or

she is a pretty or cute student. Now, the recruiting pamphlet might show when a recruiter came in, he or she was interested and thought they might take up a military service or thire a messy person & can't throw it away. The pictore of the rock-star, probably shows he or she is a jock but still likes or listens to rock-and-roll. Last but not least the text book & notes, I think the student does his homework & takes notes but obviously doesn't want to do any more than he has to. The students activites I think would really be anything that deals w/sports, his/her worries seem to be if they just slide by or if they forgot anything, thats OK. And I think this students interests vary, because he seems to like sports, rock & roll, watch T.V. and look at him/her self.

Yes, this student is a representative of "some" of the students at our school. Every one want to try its just that everyone is going to have to try to do the best they can, to their ability & get a good education. I would clasify this student as a jock or a average student who needs to learn to do more & get a better education.

--Chuck

TRAIT: IDEAS

Level: Low

Every teenager thinks about his or her future. Its wise to check out all the job options. Maybe a career in the armed forces I's right for him. I think all students worry about their grades even if they don't act like it. I mean, some times you can't get a job unless you have a college diploma the is no way you are going to get a good job without a high school diploma. Almost every teenager worries about his or her looks. All teenagers are interested in some tye of music whether it is Rock, Jazz, or even classical. They say they music is an international language.

--Jack

TRAIT: STYLE

Level: High

She can't find it anywhere. Where is it? There in her locker. The illustrious lost show. How long had it been seperated from its useless mate. A long time.

Sliding the shoe from its craddle of crumpled chemistry notes, she spotted something out of the corner of her eye. Looking closer she saw clearly a face peering at her from the steel floor of her personal domain.

She recognized the face. It was someone she saw almost every night. His voice sent chills down her spine. His handsome face always brought a flush to her own. When she had seen his smile on the cover of the TV guide she had to have it. How could she live without each day seeing Peter Jennings.

She threw the guide haphazardly into the pile of momentos.

Two entangled papers fell to the floor. She smiled to herself. There on the ground was the job application she had labored over for hours hoping to make a few extra dollars. Nothing had come of it. They had said she wasn't qualified. How can someone not be qualified to flip hamburgers in the only hamburger joint in town.

In her depression, she had applied to the armed services. That was the other paper that cluttered the hall. Her face turned a bright crimson. Had she really been that immature?

She turned her head and stared at the poster of Steve Perry that she had taken painstaking care to make sure hung perfectly straight. She now grabbed it by the corner and ripped it out. She crumpled it into a ball and threw it; two points.

She looked into a mirror she had pulled from the depths of the great trash heap and touched up her lipstick for the third time.

She straightened her uniform which she hated, and complained to herself for the fiftieth time how much she despised brown and orange. Why couldn't McDonalds make their uniforms purple and pink? She shrugged, slammed the metal box shut, and sauntered off down the hall.

Now I stare into the face which moments before had posed the question to me "Was the girl in Locker 21 an average teenager?"

I looked for some expression that might tell me if he understood. A grin broke out across his face and I realized that yes, this adult had seen my abstract reply--and understood.

--Jill

TRAIT: STYLE

Level: Medium

The student who owns Locker 21 is that of a typical teenager in the year of 1985. The locker holds items which are the main concerns of the young adults in our society today. Most students have big dreams and goals that they keep to themselves. Some share their interests with others and some keep it hidden. The chemistry textbook and class notes that we find on the top shelf show that we have a conscientious student. This person knows that grades are of great importance to make something out of your life. The student knows that there is a fine line that must be drawn when it comes to separating the social life and studying. Another item we find is a recruiting pamphlet from the armed services.

Some students who are just not ready for college, cannot afford it, or may not have the grades, look into the services. The services offer the graduate of high school who is undetermined with what to do in life a chance to decide. Every student in high school is scared about doing and making the right decision about their future. All teenagers know that extra-curricular activities are good to have on their college applications. The Nike running shoe dangling on the inside of the locker represents that kids are willing to do something extra to help their future. Also, some teenagers are given a special talent in sports. They can use this talent to get scholarships into college or even make a career in the sport. I think that everyone has a special talent inside of them. Whether it is in sports, music, or their grades we all have something special in all of us. Some people find their talent at an early age while others do not find it until years to come. We also find at the bottom of the locker an application for a job after school. The typical teenager shows his first sign of growing up when they go and do something on their own. When a teenager gets a job they are showing signs of independence from their parents. They are making their own money and getting a sense of responsibility. They know that their family cannot always do everything and that they must do some things on their own. Some teenagers start becoming less dependent of

their parents very fast while others take their time. Everyone does things when they are ready. So Locker 21 shows us a typical teenager. A teenager who wants to be somebody. All students may not show it but inside they want a successful future. But they also know that if they want a future that it can be done by no one except themselves.

--Mark

TRAIT: STYLE

Level: Low

To who will read this the student who has this locker is very nice. I guess he likes sports, because he has a nike running in his locker. His name is Dave. He is very unorganized, his locker shows it. Daves locker is always a mess, and he has just about anything you can imagine in their.

Dave relly likes Rock and Roll, hes always listen to Rock and Roll. He has a poster of his favoret Rock Star on the inside part of the door.

One day got pamphlet from a recruting officer. Dave going to the Army and college. The recruting pamphlet from the recruiting officer to fill out. Dave has a mirror in his locker of his favorite Rock group and one day he found out that he had broke it. A teacher found all glass on the floor. So Dave cleaned it up. Dave has you can see is very mess.

--William

TRAIT: PRESENTATION

Level: High

The articles contained in Locker 21 hint at the wide spectrum of interests and responsibilities that teen-agers possess today. They represent the attempt made by most young adults to gain knowledge and experience through participation in many different activities. Often these activities conflict, and it is then that all aspects--pros and cons--must be considered, and specific choices made.

The Nike running shoe represents the great emphasis placed on sports during the high school years. Many feel pressured to succeed to their potential in the area, regardless of the cost. Indeed, football, basketball, and track are often found to be the focal points of the high school careers of some students, though not all.

The presence of job applications and recruiting pamphlets make it evident that the student has begun to plan his future, or at least examine a few of the vast number of choices. Indecision concerning this subject is often a great source of stress for teen-agers.

The mirror conveys the insecurities and self-consciousness felt by a young person. His image of self is at a crucial point and influences every action and characteristic of his person, especially his appearances.

Interestingly enough, the chemistry book is the last mentioned on the list. Maybe it was found on the bottom of the locker, symbolic of the way education has taken second or third place to some students. After all, this is a school locker, and the chemistry book was the only school-related item mentioned.

As many areas of a teenage life are worrisome, the need for a release of tension is quite necessary and, as displayed by the rock

poster and TV program guide, is found through music and the media. They enable a student to express his feeling in a way beneficial to himself, and also provide a means of escape from difficulties.

Since the teen-age personality is so diverse, and the word teen-age itself covers such a complex category, one may find it no easy task to describe a typical teen-ager. However, several of these qualities can usually be found in each teen-ager, though some more prevalent than the others.

--Judy

TRAIT: PRESENTATION

Level: Medium

The student who owns locker twenty-one is definitely typical of the students I know!

This student is generally on top of things. From the recruiting pamphlet from the armed forces and the application for the after-school job, he also seems to be looking toward the future and well able to handle responsibility. The chemistry textbook and notes suggest that this student has plans for college and gets exceptional grades in school. The TV program guide for the week and the poster of a rock star, along with the Nike running shoe suggest that the student, although trying to mature is still more child than adult.

This student would be a representative of the students of this school in the respect of his trying to mature too quickly and placing too much responsibility on himself. Students today have to be prepared for the "real world" by the time they enter high-school. The recruiting pamphlet for the armed forces and the application for an after-school job prove that. Students today are mature enough for added responsibility and yet immature in the fact that they wear designer shoes and keep mirrors in their lockers. Students are all trying to hasten the growing-up process but none of them pause long enough to realize that it occurs naturally.

--Barbara

Level: Low

The student who owns locker 21 is very typical of the teenagers that I know. I would say that the items in his locker represents him very well. For instance, The poster of the rock star. This shows that he is in to the music scene as many of the young people of today are. And this poster must be of a rock star that he likes. Next is the pamphlet for the armed forces. This shows that the student is considering his future, will he go to college, get a job, or fight for the cause in which he believes in. Next is the mirror. Now this definitely shows that he cares about his appearance, many older people think that teenagers are slobs but they are not. Now, we come to the text book and notes. This person must like chemistry other wise they would not have taken notes the only reason there are no other books is because he took them home to study and do home work. Next we have the application for a job now this person is thinking about now trying to support himself now, using money for school expenses such as, class fees, lunch, clothes, and some pocket change. Finally we have the T.V. Guide. This person probably likes television. Who doesn't? Yes this person is a very typical teenager of 1985.

--Amanda

II. E. YOUNGSTOWN STATE: Sample Letter to School District

SCHOOL DISTRICT -

SAMPLE LETTER TO SCHOOL DISTRICT 93/04

EARLIER THIS SCHOOL YEAR SOME OF YOUR STUDENTS WROTE ESSAYS WHICH WERE A PART OF A HIGH SCHOOL-UNIVERSITY PROJECT ASSESSING THE WRITING SKILLS OF ABOUT 3500 JUNIORS IN 19 HIGH SCHOOLS IN THIS AREA. EACH ESSAY WAS EVALUATED BY AT LEAST TWO TEACHERS FROM THE PROJECT HIGH SCHOOLS AND THE SCORES WERE THEN AVERAGED. EACH TEACHER CONSIDERED THE STUDENT'S PERFORMANCE IN FIVE DIFFERENT AREAS OR "TRAITS" OF WRITING. THE HIGHEST SCORE GIVEN FOR ANY TRAIT IS 7; THE LOWEST IS 1. BELOW IS A REPORT SUMMARIZING THE SCORES OF YOUR STUDENTS IN THIS WRITING.

PLEASE REMEMBER THAT THIS REPORT IS AN EVALUATION OF ONE PARTICULAR WRITING PERFORMANCE. TO THE EXTENT THAT THIS WRITING SAMPLE REFLECTS YOUR STUDENTS' COMPOSITION SKILLS AT THIS TIME, YOU CAN USE THE REPORT TO HELP YOU DECIDE WHICH AREAS OF WRITING, IF ANY, ARE IN NEED OF IMPROVEMENT.

THE PERFORMANCE OF YOUR 2041 EVALUATED STUDENTS CAN BE SUMMARIZED AS FOLLOWS:

T R A I T		PERFORMANCE
PURPOSE:	THE PAPER SHOWS THAT STUDENTS CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD THE WRITING TASK AND THE AUDIENCE THEY WERE TO ADDRESS.	ABOVE AVERAGE - 8.1% AVERAGE - 72.9% BELOW AVERAGE - 18.8% MEAN SCORE - 4.0 MEDIAN SCORE - 4.0
IDEAS:	THE ESSAY SHOWS ORIGINAL THINKING AND USE OF SPECIFIC, APPROPRIATE DETAILS.	ABOVE AVERAGE - 6.4% AVERAGE - 68.6% BELOW AVERAGE - 24.8% MEAN SCORE - 3.7 MEDIAN SCORE - 3.5
DIRECTION:	THE ESSAY CLEARLY FOCUSES ON A MAIN IDEA AND IS WELL ORGANIZED.	ABOVE AVERAGE - 5.2% AVERAGE - 69.9% BELOW AVERAGE - 24.7% MEAN SCORE - 3.7 MEDIAN SCORE - 3.5
STYLE:	THE VOCABULARY AND SENTENCES USED SHOW VARIETY AND LIVELINESS.	ABOVE AVERAGE - 4.5% AVERAGE - 68.0% BELOW AVERAGE - 27.4% MEAN SCORE - 3.6 MEDIAN SCORE - 3.5
PRESENTATION:	THE SENTENCE STRUCTURE, USAGE, AND MECHANICS IN THE PAPER ARE CORRECT.	ABOVE AVERAGE - 4.6% AVERAGE - 65.2% BELOW AVERAGE - 30.1% MEAN SCORE - 3.5 MEDIAN SCORE - 3.5

ABOVE AVERAGE (7 TO 6) CLEARLY ABOVE AVERAGE WORK, THOUGH NOT NECESSARILY FLAWLESS
 AVERAGE (5.5 TO 3) SLIGHTLY ABOVE AVERAGE TO SLIGHTLY BELOW AVERAGE WORK
 BELOW AVERAGE (2.5 TO 1) CLEARLY BELOW AVERAGE WORK

EARLIER THIS SCHOOL YEAR 4TH, 7TH AND 10TH GRADE STUDENTS WROTE ESSAYS WHICH WERE A PART OF A PROJECT ASSESSING THE WRITING SKILLS OF ABOUT 1500 GEAUGA COUNTY STUDENTS. EACH ESSAY WAS EVALUATED BY AT LEAST TWO TEACHERS FROM THE PROJECT HIGH SCHOOLS AND THE SCORES WERE THEN AVERAGED. EACH TEACHER CONSIDERED THE STUDENT'S PERFORMANCE IN FIVE DIFFERENT AREAS OR "TRAITS" OF WRITING. THE HIGHEST SCORE GIVEN FOR ANY TRAIT IS 7 THE LOWEST IS 1. BELOW IS A REPORT SUMMARIZING THE SCORES OF YOUR STUDENTS IN THIS WRITING.

PLEASE REMEMBER THAT THIS REPORT IS AN EVALUATION OF ONE PARTICULAR WRITING PERFORMANCE. TO THE EXTENT THAT THIS WRITING SAMPLE REFLECTS YOUR STUDENTS' COMPOSITION SKILLS AT THIS TIME, YOU CAN USE THE REPORT TO HELP YOU DECIDE WHICH AREAS OF WRITING, IF ANY, ARE IN NEED OF IMPROVEMENT.

THE PERFORMANCE OF YOUR 22 EVALUATED STUDENTS CAN BE SUMMARIZED AS FOLLOWS:

* - - - - - T R A I T - - - - - * * - PERFORMANCE - *
(THESE STATEMENTS DESCRIBE THE HIGHEST PERFORMANCE (7) IN EACH TRAIT.)

PURPOSE: A SCORE OF 7 IN THIS TRAIT SHOWS THAT ABOVE AVERAGE - 7
THE STUDENT CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD THE AVERAGE - 12
WRITING TASK AND THE AUDIENCE HE/SHE BELOW AVERAGE - 3
WAS TO ADDRESS. MEAN SCORE - 5.0
MEDIAN SCORE - 5.5

DIRECTION: A SCORE OF 7 IN THIS TRAIT SHOWS ABOVE AVERAGE - 3
THAT THE ESSAY CLEARLY FOCUSED ON A AVERAGE - 18
MAIN IDEA AND WAS WELL ORGANIZED. BELOW AVERAGE - 1
MEAN SCORE - 4.4
MEDIAN SCORE - 4.5

IDEAS: A SCORE OF 7 IN THIS TRAIT SHOWS ABOVE AVERAGE - 2
ORIGINAL THINKING AND USE OF AVERAGE - 19
SPECIFIC, APPROPRIATE DETAILS. BELOW AVERAGE - 1
MEAN SCORE - 4.5
MEDIAN SCORE - 4.5

STYLE: A SCORE OF 7 IN THIS TRAIT SHOWS ABOVE AVERAGE - 2
THAT THE VOCABULARY AND SENTENCES AVERAGE - 18
USED WERE VARIED AND LIVELY. BELOW AVERAGE - 2
MEAN SCORE - 4.5
MEDIAN SCORE - 4.5

PRESENTATION: A SCORE OF 7 IN THIS TRAIT SHOWS ABOVE AVERAGE - 1
THAT THE SENTENCE STRUCTURE, USAGE, AVERAGE - 18
AND MECHANICS IN THE PAPER WERE BELOW AVERAGE - 3
CORRECT. MEAN SCORE - 4.1
MEDIAN SCORE - 4.5

ABOVE AVERAGE (7 TO 6) CLEARLY ABOVE AVERAGE WORK, THOUGH NOT NECESSARILY FLAWLESS

AVERAGE (5.5 TO 3) SLIGHTLY ABOVE AVERAGE TO SLIGHTLY BELOW AVERAGE WORK

BELOW AVERAGE (2.5 TO 1) CLEARLY BELOW AVERAGE WORK

COUNTY

WINTER 1986

EARLIER THIS SCHOOL YEAR 4TH, 7TH AND 10TH GRADE STUDENTS WROTE ESSAYS WHICH WERE A PART OF A PROJECT ASSESSING THE WRITING SKILLS OF ABOUT 1500 GEAUGA COUNTY STUDENTS. EACH ESSAY WAS EVALUATED BY AT LEAST TWO TEACHERS FROM THE PROJECT HIGH SCHOOLS AND THE SCORES WERE THEN AVERAGED. EACH TEACHER CONSIDERED THE STUDENT'S PERFORMANCE IN FIVE DIFFERENT AREAS OR "TRAITS" OF WRITING. THE HIGHEST SCORE GIVEN FOR ANY TRAIT IS 7 THE LOWEST IS 1. BELOW IS A REPORT SUMMARIZING THE SCORES OF YOUR STUDENTS IN THIS WRITING.

PLEASE REMEMBER THAT THIS REPORT IS AN EVALUATION OF ONE PARTICULAR WRITING PERFORMANCE. TO THE EXTENT THAT THIS WRITING SAMPLE REFLECTS YOUR STUDENTS' COMPOSITION SKILLS AT THIS TIME, YOU CAN USE THE REPORT TO HELP YOU DECIDE WHICH AREAS OF WRITING, IF ANY, ARE IN NEED OF IMPROVEMENT.

THE PERFORMANCE OF YOUR 89 EVALUATED STUDENTS CAN BE SUMMARIZED AS FOLLOWS:

* - - - - - T R A I T - - - - - * * - PERFORMANCE - *

(THESE STATEMENTS DESCRIBE THE HIGHEST PERFORMANCE (7) IN EACH TRAIT.)

PURPOSE:	A SCORE OF 7 IN THIS TRAIT SHOWS THAT THE STUDENT CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD THE WRITING TASK AND THE AUDIENCE HE/SHE WAS TO ADDRESS.	ABOVE AVERAGE - 52.8% AVERAGE - 46.0% BELOW AVERAGE - 1.1% MEAN SCORE - 5.8 MEDIAN SCORE - 6.0
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DIRECTION:	A SCORE OF 7 IN THIS TRAIT SHOWS THAT THE ESSAY CLEARLY FOCUSED ON A MAIN IDEA AND WAS WELL ORGANIZED.	ABOVE AVERAGE - 37.0% AVERAGE - 62.9% BELOW AVERAGE - .0% MEAN SCORE - 5.4 MEDIAN SCORE - 5.5
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IDEAS:	A SCORE OF 7 IN THIS TRAIT SHOWS ORIGINAL THINKING AND USE OF SPECIFIC, APPROPRIATE DETAILS.	ABOVE AVERAGE - 23.5% AVERAGE - 74.1% BELOW AVERAGE - 2.2% MEAN SCORE - 5.1 MEDIAN SCORE - 5.0
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STYLE:	A SCORE OF 7 IN THIS TRAIT SHOWS THAT THE VOCABULARY AND SENTENCES USED WERE VARIED AND LIVELY.	ABOVE AVERAGE - 19.1% AVERAGE - 77.5% BELOW AVERAGE - 3.3% MEAN SCORE - 4.7 MEDIAN SCORE - 4.5
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PRESENTATION:	A SCORE OF 7 IN THIS TRAIT SHOWS THAT THE SENTENCE STRUCTURE, USAGE, AND MECHANICS IN THE PAPER WERE CORRECT.	ABOVE AVERAGE - 20.2% AVERAGE - 66.2% BELOW AVERAGE - 13.4% MEAN SCORE - 4.5 MEDIAN SCORE - 4.5
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ABOVE AVERAGE (7 TO 6) CLEARLY ABOVE AVERAGE WORK, THOUGH NOT NECESSARILY FLAWLESS

AVERAGE (5.5 TO 3) SLIGHTLY ABOVE AVERAGE TO SLIGHTLY BELOW AVERAGE WORK

BELOW AVERAGE (2.5 TO 1) CLEARLY BELOW AVERAGE WORK

DIRECTORS, PROJECT ARETE

1983-87

DR. JOHN B. MASON is Associate Professor of English and English Education at Western Washington University in Bellingham, Washington. Before moving to Washington, he served as co-director of Project Areté 1984-85 and as an assistant coordinator of composition at Youngstown State University. He has read and published a number of papers on the teaching of writing and on American literature.

DR. GRATIA MURPHY, Professor of English at Youngstown State University, serves as coordinator of composition at Youngstown State University. She teaches composition, linguistics for teachers, and the teaching of writing, and also taught secondary English as part of a year-long sabbatical. She has been co-director of Project Areté since its beginning in 1983 and is a frequent consultant to area schools and a presenter at state, regional, and national conventions.

DR. GARY SALVNER, Professor of English and Secondary Education at Youngstown State University, teaches courses in children's and adolescent literature, writing, and the teaching of both writing and literature. He has taught in elementary, junior high, and high schools and has published and read papers on numerous topics related to the teaching of English. Dr. Salvner has been co-director of Project Areté 1983-84, 1985-87.

UNIVERSITY CONSULTANTS TO TEACHER TO TEACHER

SECOND EDITION

Before joining the English faculty at Youngstown State University in 1984, DR. BEGE K. BOWERS taught at Florence-Darlington Technical College and at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. In addition to working with Youngstown State University's new professional writing and editing program, she serves as one of the composition coordinators and directs the year-long practicum for graduate teaching assistants in English. Her specialties include rhetoric, editing, and Victorian literature.

Chairperson of the Youngstown State University English Department since 1974, DR. BARBARA BROTHERS is an elected member of the Board of Directors of the College English Association and of the Modern Language Association Delegate Assembly, and she serves on the editorial board of The Barbara Pym Newsletter. Formerly a member of the Ohio Humanities Council and president of the College English Association of Ohio, she has published essays on modern British writers, women's literary history, and professional issues.

DR. H. THOMAS MCCrackEN, Professor of English and Secondary Education at Youngstown State University, has been engaged in teacher education for twenty-nine years. He has published in state and national journals and received state and national grants for work in teacher education. Currently he serves as Chairman of the Conference on English Education and is a member of the Executive Committee of the National Council of Teachers of English.

Having received her Ph.D. degree from the University of Michigan in 1986, DR. VIRGINIA MONSEAU joined the English Department faculty at Youngstown State University in September of that year. As Assistant Professor of English, she teaches courses in children's literature, adolescent literature, and composition. She has had articles published in several professional journals; and, as a member of the Women's Committee of the National Council of Teachers of English, she is currently at work on a collaborative publication celebrating peioneering women in the Council.

DR. SANDRA W. STEPHAN, Assistant Professor of English at Youngstown State University, serves as a coordinator of composition. She teaches freshman and upper-level writing courses, as well as rhetoric and literature. Her special interests include the history of rhetoric, the teaching of writing, scientific and medical writing, and 18th century literature. She came to Youngstown from Tulane University, where she received her Ph.D. degree and directed the Writing Center.

TEACHER/AUTHORS OF TEACHER TO TEACHER
SECOND EDITION

DONNA BLASIMAN earned a Bachelor of Science in Education Degree at Youngstown State University and a Masters Degree in Education from Kent State University. She has taught twenty-four years as West Branch Schools. During that time she has taught first, second, fourth, and fifth grades at Knox and Beloit, and is currently teaching third grade at Goshen Center School.

DOROTHY CLARK has been on the faculty at Woodrow Wilson High School in Youngstown for twenty-two years, teaching all levels of English and journalism. She currently is an instructor of Advanced Placement and Senior English, and is advisor to the yearbook and to Quest, the all-city literary magazine. She has her undergraduate degree from Youngstown State University and her Master of Arts Degree from Kent State University.

MARIE CLAYPOOLE received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Youngstown State University. Following a teaching assignment in the Austintown Schools, she has been at Canfield Middle School since 1980, where she serves as English Department Chair and teaches eighth grade English.

MARGARET J. FORD has taught English in the Campbell City Schools, both at the high school and middle school levels, for fifteen years. In addition to a Bachelor of Arts in English from Notre Dame College of Ohio, she holds a Masters Degree in Library Science from Kent State University, where she was elected to Beta Phi Mu, the international library science honorary.

JOYCE GALIETI has been on the faculty of Western Reserve School District all of her teaching career, with seventeen years as a teacher and the past three years as principal of Ellsworth Elementary School. She received her Bachelor of Science degree in Education from Mount Union College and her Master of Science in Education degree from Kent State University. She has done additional graduate work at both Youngstown State University and The University of Akron.

JOHN HAY has been an English teacher at Boardman High School for the past twelve years. He has taught at all high school levels, including eleventh and twelfth grade composition courses, Vocational Business English, and a course in Mass Media, as well as traditional literature survey courses. A Phi Beta Kappa graduate in English and economics from Ohio University, he holds both a Master of Science in Education and a Master Teacher in English degree from Youngstown State University.

SANDRA MCNUTT graduated from Kent State University with a secondary education major in English and a minor in HPER. She taught at Cloverleaf High School for two years, and in 1974 began teaching at West Branch High School, where she currently teaches junior English and remedial reading. She has also been yearbook advisor for thirteen years. The yearbook has won the Showcase Award for an all-color yearbook, and she was awarded the Gold Circle Advisor's Award. She received a Master of Science in Education degree in 1980 from Youngstown State University with a degree in reading supervision.

NANCY MILLIGAN teaches eighth grade English at Sexton Junior High School, Struthers. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Kent State University and has taken additional hours at Youngstown State University and the University of Salzburg, Austria. She has taught grades one through eight in the parochial schools and the public schools in Struthers for fifteen years. She is a member of Delta Kappa Gamma.

ANNE NOCK has been teaching in the Youngstown City Schools for ten years. Currently assigned to fourth grade at West Elementary, she has also taught three years in second grade and has six years' experience as a teacher of learning disabled students. She received both her Bachelor of Science and her Masters in Special Education from Youngstown State University.

MARY ELIZABETH ROSA has been teaching fifth and sixth grade language arts classes at Madison Elementary School in Youngstown for three years. A Cum Laude graduate of Youngstown State University, she holds a Bachelor of Science in Elementary and Special Education (LDBD). She is currently working toward a Masters Degree in Education in Reading Supervision.

JOAN SCHMITZER is a Summa Cum Laude graduate of Youngstown State University and has taught for the past twelve years at Poland Seminary High School. She serves as English Department chair at Poland and has been a spokesman for Project Areté at both National Council of Teachers of English and Modern Language Association meetings.

JUDITH SHONN has been a member of the faculty of Frank Ohl Middle School in Austintown for eight years. For the last five years she has taught eighth grade English and also served as advisor to the school newspaper. She has her Bachelor of Arts Degree from Youngstown State University, where she is currently concluding her work for a Masters Degree.

MARILOU BONTE SLAGLE has been on the faculty of Boardman Schools for ten years, presently teaching second grade at Robinwood Lane Elementary School. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Education Degree from Miami University and a Master of Science in Education, Guidance, and Counseling from Youngstown State University. A Martha Holden Jennings Scholar in 1981, she also serves as corresponding secretary for Beta Pi chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma.

SUSAN STEVENS earned her Bachelor of Science Degree at Ohio University and her Master of Arts Degree at Youngstown State University. A Martha Holden Jennings Scholar and a National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Seminar Fellow, she has taught for seventeen years at South High School in Youngstown, where she is currently English Department Chair as well as teacher of Junior and Senior Honors English.

DANTE ZAMBRINI received his Bachelor of Arts and Master of Science in Education in Secondary Principalship from Youngstown State University. A teacher of College Preparatory English, literature, composition, and vocational education at Canfield High School, he also served as an administrative/supervisory intern for the Mahoning County Schools. He has been a presenter at national meetings and is a member of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development and Phi Delta Kappa.

CONTRIBUTORS TO TEACHER TO TEACHER, 2ND EDITION

THE TRAIT OF PURPOSE

Carole L. Bertolini, Lake Milton Elementary School, D.H., Grades 1-4
Frances Chickonoski, Hayes Junior High School, Grade 7
Mary E. Davis, New Middletown Elementary School, Grade 3
Ann Marie Hiznay, Springfield Intermediate School, Grade 7
Katharine Paull, Jefferson Elementary School, Grade 2
Marilyn Samuels, Western Reserve Middle School, Grades 7-8
John P. Walsh, Chaney High School

THE TRAIT OF DIRECTION

Joan Bolkovac, Springfield Intermediate School, Grade 7
Charlotte Confer, Dobbins Elementary School, Grade 4
Michael J. Katula, Lowellville School, Grades 5-7
Fred Krolopp, South Range Intermediate School, Reading/English
Arlene Scull, John White Elementary School, Grade 6
Mary Beth Sebastiano, Hayes Junior High School, Grade 7
Kathleen J. Williams, Paul C. Bunn Elementary School, Grade 1

THE TRAIT OF IDEAS

Barbara Brigham, New Middletown Elementary School, Grade 4
Marilyn P. Brenner, Jackson School, CMR, Grades 1-6
Marcella Crann, Principal, Kirkmere Elementary School, K-6
(formerly Elementary Supervisor)
Ronald Infante, Secondary Instructional Supervisor, Mahoning Co. Schools
Rahlia M. Sakas, Poland Middle School, Grade 7
Marjorie Shilling, Frank Ohl Middle School, Grade 8
Amy Sposato, Sheridan Elementary School, Grade 3
Judith Tesone, Hayes Junior High School, Grades 7-8

THE TRAIT OF STYLE

Robert Alleman, Canfield Middle School, Grade 8
Carol Ann Filicky, Fifth Street School, Grade 4
Suzanne Foster, Curriculum Specialist, Youngstown City Schools
Margaret Kerrigan, West Elementary School, Grade 3
Karen Libb, Jackson Milton Middle School, Grade 6
Norma J. Mahone, Kirkmere Elementary School, L.D. Grades 4-5
Glenda West, Hayes Junior High School, Remedial Reading, Grades 7-8

THE TRAIT OF PRESENTATION

Barbara Childs, John W. Davis Elementary School, Grade 4
Gail M. Gentile, John White Elementary School, Grades 4-5
David Cicero, South Range Middle School, Grade 6
Sally G. Ocker, Manor Avenue School, Grade 4
Katherine Siatras, Gordon Intermediate School, Grade 4
Susan Tartler, Hayes Junior High School, Grades 7-8
Shirley J. Verbanik, Elementary Supervisor, Mahoning County Schools

TEACHER/AUTHORS OF TEACHER TO TEACHER
1ST EDITION, 1985

THE TRAIT OF PURPOSE

Dorothy Clark, Woodrow Wilson High School
Marion Dangerfield, Struthers High School
Robert D. Kohut, Lowellville High School
Barbara Jones Mauch, Springfield Local High School
John P. Walsh, Chaney High School
Michael Finney, Youngstown State University English Department

THE TRAIT OF DIRECTION

Gloria Dunham Bayowski, formerly of South Range High School
William DeAngelo, Canfield High School
Helen Frangos, Campbell Memorial High School
Sandra McNutt, West Branch High School
Paula Putarek Springfield Local High School
Alice Budge, Youngstown State University English Department

THE TRAIT OF IDEAS

John Hay, Boardman High School
James E. Itts, Chaney High School
David Philibin, Administrative Assistant, West Branch School
(formerly Instructional Supervisor, Mahoning Co. Schools)
Susan Stevens, South High School
Mary Ellen Wilcox, Mahoning County Joint Vocational School
Thomas McCracken, Youngstown State University, Secondary Education and
English Departments

THE TRAIT OF STYLE

Suzanne Foster, Chaney High School and
Curriculum Specialist, Youngstown City Schools
Joan E. Schmitzer, Poland Seminary High School
Deborah Smith, East High School
Mary Stamler, Chaney High School
Dante Zambrini, Canfield High School
Bege Bowers, Youngstown State University English Department
John Mason, Western Washington University
(formerly Youngstown State University English Department)

THE TRAIT OF PRESENTATION

Julia Applegate, Woodrow Wilson High School
Barbara E. Huberty, Canfield High School
Douglas T. Kilbreath, Sebring High School
Frances M. Marando, Struthers High School
Barbara Ward McGraw, formerly of Canfield High School
Sherri Zander, Director of Writing Center, Youngstown State University

PROJECT ARETE PERSONNEL

- I. Youngstown City Schools
20 West Wood Street
Youngstown, OH 44503 (216) 744-6900

Superintendent: Mr. Emanuel Catsoules

Director of Instruction: Dr. Richard Sheely

English Curriculum Specialist: Suzanne Foster

Data Center: Kenneth Mineo, Director
Michelle Haylett, Programmer/Analyst
- II. Mahoning County Office of Education
2801 Market Street
Youngstown, OH 44507-1693 (216) 788-2481

Mahoning County Superintendent: Ronald Kendall

Director of Instructional Services: Robert Thomas

Secondary Instructional Supervisor: Ronald Infante

Computer Center: Dr. Thomas Stellers, Computer Specialist
- III. Youngstown State University
Department of English
Youngstown, OH 44555 (216) 742-3415

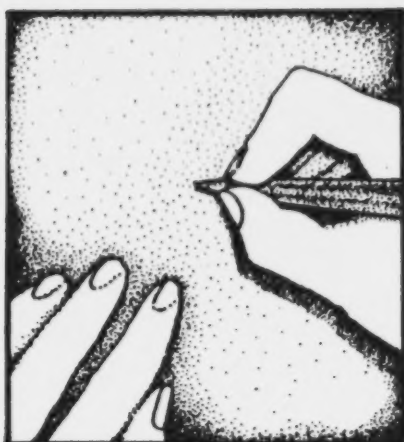
Chair, Department of English: Dr. Barbara Brothers

Directors, Project Areté: Dr. Gratia Murphy
Dr. Gary Salvner

WRITE ANGLES



Project INTERACT Newsletter



This issue: **THE WRITING PROCESS**

Write Angles, a teacher-written and produced newsletter, is made possible through project INTERACT, a secondary school-university articulation endeavor funded by the Warren and Trumbull County Schools, Youngstown State University, and the Ohio Board of Regents. Five issues will be published (January through May, 1989), each dealing with some aspect of writing, reading and language instruction. We hope you enjoy reading *Write Angles* and that you will find this issue and each future one useful to you as a classroom teacher and/or administrator.

This first issue of *Write Angles* is a discussion of the writing process. Future issues will discuss how language skills develop, how collaborative teaching and learning occur, how reading and writing are interdependent and mutually reinforcing activities, and how we as teachers respond to, evaluate, and assess written composition.

"CAN WE WRITE ON THE BACK?" AND OTHER PERTINENT QUESTIONS: AN OVERVIEW OF THE WRITING PROCESS

Worst-Case Scenario No. 1: The Writer

It's 8 p.m., and you're alone for the first time all day. You don your sweats, assemble all the right "tools," and head for your favorite writing spot. This time, you're sure, the words will flow. You won't "block." Your masterpiece--the Great American Novel, the committee report, the article for the school newspaper, the application letter--will be finished in no time. What a breeze! You'll win the Nobel Prize! Your colleagues will love you! Students will rush for an autograph! The superintendent will beg you to take the new job!

In the fever of creation, you put pen to paper or fingers to keyboard, and . . . nothing. You fret and stew. Your hands turn cold. Your stomach tightens. Forget the Nobel Prize. Right now, you'd settle for a paragraph, a sentence, a word. You stare at the paper or monitor, get up and go to the bathroom, pour a cup of coffee, stare some more, and realize, once again, that writing doesn't just "happen." So much for inspiration!

Worst-Case Scenario No. 2: The Writing Teacher

Tired and bleary-eyed, the teacher marches into class, returns last week's papers, and assigns another book report (or poem or story).

"Can we work on it at home, Miss Smith?"

"No, Susie, of course you can't take it home; it's due before lunch."

"But I can't write that fast, Miss Smith."

"Of course you can! We've been studying writing all year."

"Can we write on the back, Miss Smith?"

"No, Tommy, you know how important neatness is. You have to turn this in!"

"Well, then, can we mark things out if we do it neatly, Miss Smith?"

"Of course, not, Tommy. This is a product you should be proud of! Now, quit asking questions and get to work. You didn't get a very good grade on the paper I just handed back. I expect you to do better this time!"

Perhaps these scenarios are familiar to you. Writing, after all, is hard work, and even the best of writers (to say nothing about infrequent or unpracticed writers like us and our students) break down or get stuck once in a while.

Fortunately, twenty years of research have revealed that while some breakdowns may be inevitable, both writers and writing teachers have

(continued)

means for contending with them. The most exciting realization of this research, perhaps, is that writing is not a single activity but a series of activities. It is, in other words, a "process." When we teach writing, then, we focus on the processes that lead to the finished product, not just on the product itself. The fact that teachers are increasingly emphasizing process means that "Worst-Case Scenario No. 2" is a much less common occurrence today than it was when we went to school.

Because the writing process is so important for teachers and writers alike, this first issue of *Write Angles* is devoted entirely to exploring the process and its implications for the teaching of writing at all levels.

The writing or composing process includes all stages that writers go through from the time they have a reason to write (a classroom assignment, a job they want to apply for) until they put a particular piece of writing to rest (turn it in for a final grade, put it in the mail). Though different researchers assign different names to various stages of the process, they recognize basically the same three or four stages.

The earliest stage of the composing process is the planning or **prewriting** stage--the time at which we think about a topic, ask ourselves questions about our audience and purpose search our memories for relevant information, fret and stew, jot down notes, and make preliminary plans for organizing the piece.

The next stage in the composing process is known as drafting, translating, or **writing**, depending on whose terminology is used. At the writing stage, we take the ideas and information generated in the prewriting stage and put them into written form. Our poem or story or composition takes shape. We write fairly fluently unless we get "stuck," at which point we may return to the prewriting stage and think and plan some more. As a rule, we write most effectively if we don't get hung up on spelling, usage, and wording at this point. These mechanical and stylistic matters can be dealt with later.

After writing, we come to the **rewriting** or reviewing stage, which is usually divided into two separate steps: revising and editing. When we revise, we reread what we've written, evaluate how well it serves our purposes, determine what we could do more effectively, and rewrite. This is the stage at which we might move sentences, paragraphs, or sections of the paper, delete portions that are ineffective, and perhaps generate new material that will better serve a particular purpose.

Then, finally, we **edit**, proofreading for weaknesses or errors in spelling, punctuation, and usage. Focusing on editing too early in the writing process hampers efforts at the other stages and may prevent a writer from proceeding at all. Researchers have discovered that while most of us follow a process much like the one described here, our writing is recursive: that is, the steps are not mutually exclusive, and we move back and forth between

them. Likewise, an individual's writing processes may change over time--even for mature writers. Think about how you approached writing several years ago and how you approach it now. You may have moved from pen and paper to a typewriter, from a typewriter to a word processor, or otherwise changed the ritual you now find most comfortable.

And finally, one good writer's process may differ markedly from the process espoused by another good writer. No doubt, you know some good writers who seem to blitz smoothly from start to finish--while others plug on at painstaking pace, trying to make each sentence "perfect" as they go. When we speak of the writing process, we might more accurately speak of **writing processes**. Teaching "the writing process" means helping Tommy and Susie discover the processes that work best for them.



Write Angles Staff

Writers

Linda Detwiler--Warren G. Harding High School
Bonnie Miller--Lakeview Middle School
Ruth Vukovich--Hubbard High School
Dr. Bege Bowers--Youngstown State University

Contributors

Jean Cestone Bowser--E. J. Blott Elementary School
Linda Woodford--Howland Glen Elementary School
Diane Rogers--Gustavus Elementary School
Karen Richardson--La Brae High School
Rona Kaniewski--Champion Middle School

Co-Editors

Dr. Gratia Murphy--Youngstown State University
Dr. Gary Salvner--Youngstown State University

Graphic Art

Elayne M. S. Kloviss

Production Editor

Mark Haverstock

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DID YOU KNOW . . . ? WHAT RESEARCH SAYS ABOUT THE WRITING PROCESS

How can researchers observe exactly what goes on in a writer's mind? Writers themselves can't always verbalize the process they follow as they think and write, and we all know how tempting it is to alter our "natural" behavior when we're being observed. Yet, despite these limitations, studies of the writing process have yielded fascinating information about how writers of various ages compose. Here are a few items gleaned from the sources listed in our bibliography:

*For in-school assignments, students spend an average of only one to four minutes prewriting. Weak writers spend less time prewriting than do strong writers.

*Although students spend little time prewriting for school-sponsored writing, they do considerable prewriting for self-initiated writing.

*On the average, children compose at a rate of 9 to 13.5 words a minute. They produce more and compose better when they are free to talk and move around; they produce less in formal, restricted settings.

*Young children don't seem to have a whole story in mind when they start writing; in fact, they seldom plan any further ahead than the end of the clause they're producing at any one time.

*Very young writers have difficulty focusing on a topic. They move from point to point in a manner that is "additive and associative."

*For young children, rereading a draft is a "stimulus for continuing," not a "stimulus for rewriting." If asked to expand, they will add details nonselectively and at the end of the piece. Older children learn to write stories that are more coherent.

*Asking young children questions about their writing helps them remember and produce information about their topic.

*Young writers write for themselves. Approaching writing with a "sense of play," they show little concern for mistakes or failures. They are happy to "decode" their writing for anyone who asks. Later, as they discover that

others can't always decode what they've written, they lose their sense of play, become more aware of audience, and show more concern about mistakes. Older writers are more "anxious" about writing than are younger writers.

*A child's writing processes change over time. By fourth grade, children seem to be able to plan as they write. [See Calkins for detailed descriptions of writing development from kindergarten through early adolescence.]

*Early in the year, a nine-year-old usually writes out alternative versions of parts of a story and then chooses one; later in the year, she may create the alternative versions in her mind instead.

*Students write fairly fluently while composing narratives. They stop (presumably to think and "regroup") much more frequently while composing persuasive or explanatory papers.

*College students generate less irrelevant information during the early stages of the writing process and include less irrelevant information in the actual writing than do young writers.

*When students are taught to evaluate their own and others' compositions according to specific criteria, the quality of their writing often improves.

*Having students complete grammar or usage exercises does not significantly improve the quality of their writing.

*While writing, better writers devote more attention to content and structure; poor writers pay more attention to spelling and mechanics.

*Most writers compose recursively; in other words, instead of proceeding from one stage of the writing process to the next in a linear fashion, they do some editing and generating of ideas at each stage.

*When asked to revise (without being taught to revise), students make more changes at the sentence level than in organization or content.

*The revision efforts of young children are hampered by their difficulty with erasing old material, inserting new material, and recopying.

*Frequently, children can detect more errors in their drafts than they can actually correct. They know "something is wrong," but they don't know how to "fix" it.

MARTIAN VISITORS

PURPOSE: To practice writing a narrative based on the writer's imagination.

PREPARATION: Ask students to look at the drawing of the Martian, and ask them to imagine what they might do if they found "it" in their back yard one day. Sample questions to brainstorm with the class are:

- Would you be afraid of the Martian? Why or Why not?
- Would you take it to school with you?
- Would you take it to a store? What would you buy it?
- Would you show it to your friend?
- How do you think the Martian would go into the back yard?
- Would you go back with the Martian to its home if it asked you?

Record the answers on the blackboard.

WRITING: Have each child write a story of what happened when he or she saw a Martian in the back yard.

REVISING: Put children into groups of three. Have each child read his or her story aloud to the other two. The listeners would then answer three questions for the author:

- 1) What did the writer of the story say happened when the Martian landed?
- 2) What did you like best about the story?
- 3) What would you like to hear more about?

Students would then revise their stories.

EDITING: Since this would be an early writing activity, concentrate on just the basic "rules" of writing: starting each sentence with a capital letter, putting some punctuation (period, question mark, or exclamation point) at the end of each sentence.

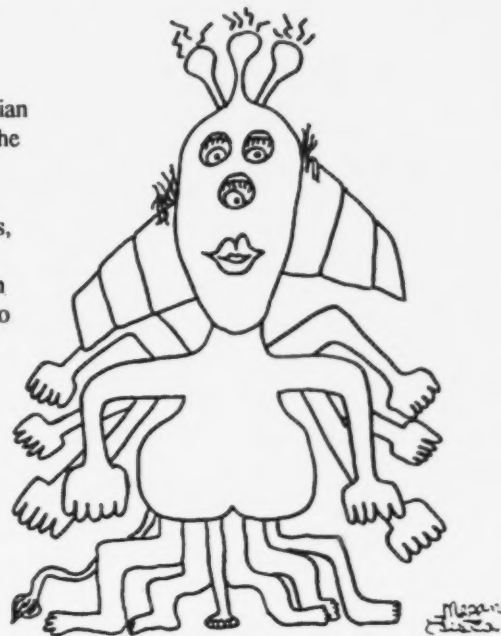
PUBLISHING: Have the read their stories aloud to the whole class.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

1. Have each student draw a picture of his/her Martian and write the final draft of the story below it. Post the papers for all to enjoy.

2. Make a book cover to illustrate a back yard (trees, a swing set, grass, flowers, etc.). Put the stories inside the cover and title the collection, "One Day in My Back Yard..." Put the book in the room for all to read, or present a copy to the library from the class.

Adapted from an idea by Jean Cestone Bowser,
E. J. Blout School, Liberty



FROG FANTASIES

Purpose: To introduce students to narrative writing by having them compose a story based upon a pictures-only illustrated book.

Preparation: Needed materials include Mercer Mayer's Frog Goes to Dinner or other illustrated books in the series; other illustrated books containing frogs, such as Arnold Lobel's Frog and Toad Are Friends, and the frog picture below, one for each student.

Presentation

Prewriting: Teacher reads students one or more picture books containing frogs, such as Arnold Lobel's Frog and Toad Are Friends. Then, students are given frog pictures, discuss frog characteristics, and make a list of words to describe both frogs in story books and frogs they might have seen themselves. Teacher writes the words on the board as students brainstorm.

Next, students "read" together Mayer's wordless picture book Frog Goes to Dinner (or another book in that series, e.g. A Boy, A Dog and a Frog or One Frog Too Many). Teacher asks students to report what happens in the story, getting as many comments as possible about not only the plot, but also the book's characters, settings, etc.

Writing: With the teacher using the board to record what is said, the class collaborates on a written version of the wordless picture book. During this composing stage, the teacher uses leading questions (ex. What does the frog look like? or How could we describe the setting of this part of the story?) to get students to create a full narrative by including descriptive details as well as a report of the story's events.

Revising: The story is read and revised, if necessary, using the group's suggestions.

Editing: the teacher edits the story in consultation with the class and then prepares a final copy that can be duplicated and distributed to the whole class.

Additional Comments: Students should sign their story as authors. One possible follow-up might be to have the class re-illustrate their story, or to have two classes write stories based on different books in the series and then illustrate each other's, finally, for fun, comparing their illustrations with Mercer Mayer's originals.

Adapted from an idea by Deborah Cooper, Lakeview Schools



SIGNATURE INTERVIEW

Purpose: To have students use the Reporter's Formula (5 W's and the H) to gather information; to use that information to write an explanatory paper.

Preparation: Make copies of a "Signature Inventory" for each member of the class (see sample below).

Presentation:

Prewriting: (Day 1) Give each student a copy of the worksheet. Students will complete lines and then initial no fewer than 6 or no more than 10 lines that they would be willing to be interviewed about. Students may add up to 3 of their own statements to the list.

The teacher will review the 5 W's and the H as sources for questions: Who? What? When? Where? Why? How? Brainstorm some questions for each.

Before the end of the class period, students in pairs trade sheets. Each will pick three statements which have been initialed and sign on the interviewer column. Formulate questions on these three statements for the next day.

(Day 2) Students will interview each other on the three statements.

Writing: Each student will use the information gathered to write a paragraph of explanation about his or her partner. Information may come from just one of the interview topics, or from more than one.

Revising: Partners will check each other's drafts for completeness and accuracy.

Publishing: Stories are posted with photographs of the interviewee being mentioned, or with some memento or article associated with the activity (a postcard of a fun vacation, a picture of the pool the swimmer goes to, etc.)

Additional Comments: This exercise is a good beginning-of-school activity to introduce the members of the class to each other.

Adapted from an idea by Bonnie Miller, Lakeview Local Schools

Interviewer _____
Interviewee _____

SIGNATURE INTERVIEW WORKSHEET

INTERVIEWEE

INTERVIEWER

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

1. I love to eat _____.
2. I always celebrate my birthday in a special way.
3. My idea of heaven has to include chocolate.
4. I have read a really good book recently.
5. I love a particular kind of ride at amusement parks.
6. I'm really glad I can _____.
7. I have an unusual pet.
8. My favorite article of clothing is my _____.
9. I love to watch _____ on TV.
10. I enjoyed my trip to _____.

"CAN WE TALK?": A GLOSSARY OF WRITING TERMS

When Joan Rivers asks her famous question, "Can we talk?", she expects a positive response. But we must share language and meanings in order to talk. The purpose of the following glossary is to provide readers of *Write Angles* with a common vocabulary for discussing writing.

Over the last twenty years, research has changed what we know about writing and the teaching of writing. Some researchers have coined words to describe their findings; others have used old words in new ways. We have included terminology of both sorts in our glossary and have tried to make the definitions as simple as possible. Consult the works in the bibliography for more complete definitions.

In the 1960s, most writing instruction emphasized the final product: the equivalent of perfectly crafted alligator shoes. Today, the emphasis has shifted to the dynamics of thinking, creating, and uttering that forge writing. The results are more akin to wrestling the live alligator. Teaching writing--like writing itself--is exciting and adventurous. Sometimes, it's messy and difficult to manage. But it's alive.

One final caution before you go in search of alligators. We offer this glossary as an aid to all those wrestling with the teaching of writing, but anyone caught saying "What paradigm of heuristics did you use to shape your discourse?" will be fed to the alligators.

GLOSSARY

aims or modes of discourse--The traditional modes are narration, description, exposition, and persuasion (or argumentation). More recent scholars might classify them as writing to tell, writing to express, and writing to change.

argumentation--writing that attempts to persuade an audience to act or think a certain way; also known as persuasion.

assessment--another term for evaluation, often used to describe large-scale testing. Specialists agree that the only acceptable method of assessing or measuring writing competency is to have students produce a piece of discourse. Multiple-choice or fill-in-the-blank tests do not measure writing competency.

audience--readers or implied readers of a work; other names include "addressee" and "receiver." Audience is a controlling factor in writing because a writer chooses words, style, content, and examples appropriate to the audience.

brainstorming--a prewriting activity designed to generate ideas. A topic is announced, and lists of words or ideas are recorded. No word or idea is criticized because the goal is to move from the obvious to the original and unique. Brainstorming works particularly well in a group setting since interaction leads to more ideas, but students may also brainstorm individually.

chaining--a technique used in prewriting to generate ideas. Chaining takes a question/answer format. The subject is written at the top of a paper, and a question is asked (by the writer or someone else). Its answer prompts a second question, and so on. Chaining leads writers to new insights, leads them to discover personal beliefs, and helps them follow through on an idea.

clustering--a prewriting technique that begins with one idea. The writer branches out to related ideas, which in turn lead to other ideas, and so on. Some ideas may later be grouped together; others may be discarded. The result frequently looks like a tree diagram, with lines branching out from a central oval or circle (containing the topic) to various related ideas.

cognition--the act or process of knowing.

coherence--a quality of effective writing that is created when the writer makes the relationship between words, sentences, ideas, and paragraphs clear. Transitions and a logical order help give a piece of writing this sense of wholeness and control. Coherence allows ideas to stick together, yet flow.

collaborative learning--learning done in groups. Recent writing instruction emphasizes the value of groups in learning about and practicing writing.

been written and picking out a "good sentence," central theme, or important idea, the student writes for five more minutes, beginning with the chosen sentence or idea. This process may be repeated. Looping is also referred to as focused freewriting.

narration--story-telling.

organization--discovering the connections and relationships among ideas and arranging the ideas in writing so that the reader can perceive the relationships. The writer might organize the material chronologically, spatially, from general to specific, from least important to most important, from least persuasive to most persuasive, or in another order that serves the writer's purpose.

outline--a method of demonstrating, graphically, main ideas and relationships among them. With traditional, formal outlining, main ideas and supporting ideas are arranged in specified ways (Roman numerals, capital letters, etc.). Listing or informal outlining may be just as effective; outlining may but need not precede prewriting or writing. It may also be used to establish a plan for revising.

paradigms--the systems of beliefs, values, and methods that inform a study or discipline. Different researchers may base their studies on different paradigms--that is, on different ideas of how the study should be structured, what should be focused on, what should be included, what should be excluded, what is important, etc. The word is also used to designate a particular researcher's description or model of some phenomenon, such as the writing process.

peer response--classroom activity in which students read each other's writing, react to it (usually in response to set criteria or teacher-supplied questions), and suggest strategies for improving it. The class may be divided into groups of three to five students each for this activity.

prewriting--the stage of the writing process during which writers decide on topics, explore topics, and perhaps arrange ideas. Some prewriting techniques or heuristics include brainstorming, chaining, clustering, cubing, freewriting, journalwriting, looping, and outlining.

process/product--two views of the teaching of writing. Current practice focuses on process, or drafting plus everything that precedes and follows it as a paper goes from ideas in the writer's head to "final" written form. Former practice focused only on the product, the final version of a paper.

prompt--the writing assignment, including the rhetorical context. A typical prompt might include the following: the role the writer is to assume, the audience to whom the

writing is to be addressed, any background information the writer needs to know, the subject to be written on, and the purpose or reason for writing--what the piece of writing is expected to achieve.

proofreading--careful examination of a text to make editing corrections.

purpose--the writer's motive for writing. Writers write to express themselves, to persuade, to explain, or to entertain.

reader--the audience for a piece of writing.

reader response--a view of reading that emphasizes the responses of readers to texts. According to this view, readers are "meaning makers" who create a sense of the message while they read, rather than simple "decoders" of meaning.

reading process--the whole act of reading, including preparations for reading (prereading) and responses given to what has been read.

recursive--the back-and-forth nature of steps in the writing process. Although the writing process is generally sequential (prewriting, drafting, revising, editing), writers don't always proceed in a linear fashion. While they are drafting, for example, they may think of a new idea or change the direction they had expected to follow, thus moving from drafting back to prewriting. They may also reread a sentence and make changes in wording, spelling, or punctuation (i.e., changes normally associated with the editing stage) before they proceed with the rest of the drafting process. Writing is recursive because writers discover new things to say or better ways of saying them as they write.

reporter's formula--a prewriting device in which the writer answers the following questions about a topic: Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?

responding--asking questions and commenting on a draft to make the writer aware of its strengths and weaknesses before he or she revises. Because responding is not the same as evaluation and a draft is not a finished piece, grades are not assigned as part of responding.

revision--a part of the rewriting stage of the composing process. In revision, writers re-view their work to decide how well their purpose has been achieved and then make changes to improve the effectiveness of a piece of writing. These changes may range from altering the organization to adding or deleting material to changing the direction or tone. Unlike the cosmetic changes that writers make while editing, revision involves substantive changes in content or arrangement.

composing--the entire process of writing, including thinking and prewriting; not just the act of writing a draft.

composition--a term that refers both to the act of composing and to the piece of writing that is produced. See **essay**.

cubing--a prewriting activity designed to force a writer to examine a topic from different perspectives. Imagine a cube with its six sides. In cubing, the writer starts with a topic or subject and "cubes" it by approaching it from six different perspectives: he or she describes it, compares it, associates it with other ideas, analyzes it, applies it, and argues for or against it. Allow three to five minutes per approach.

description--writing that attempts to let the reader picture and sense an object, scene, or person. Description appeals to any of the reader's senses that are appropriate in a given situation: sight, hearing, taste, touch, smell.

discourse--a "text" of some sort; a piece of writing; verbal expression through speech or writing. Use of this word in place of writing may eliminate confusion between writing and handwriting.

draft--a preliminary version of a piece of writing. Drafting is the act of putting thoughts into words on paper (or on a word processor); it usually follows prewriting. Teachers may read and comment on a draft but should not "grade" it. A draft is not intended to be the final, polished version of a piece of writing.

editing--proofreading; searching for omitted or repeated words and correcting mechanical mistakes such as misspellings and punctuation errors. Editing is different from revising. (See **revision**.) Although writers may edit throughout the writing process, they should not focus on editing until the very end of the process.

essay--a piece of writing usually designed to convey information. An essay may be either formal or informal; the term has become synonymous with **composition**.

evaluation--measuring the quality or effectiveness of a piece of writing. Teachers evaluate papers by measuring how well they have met the instructional goals set forth, often assigning a letter grade or a numerical score to the paper.

Analytic evaluation, or trait scoring, measures a part of the writing process, a part of the writing product, or a specific skill: one might give separate grades or scores for organization, mechanics, etc. Holistic evaluation measures the quality of the whole piece of writing. All writing skills are seen in relationship to each other and to the piece as a whole, and thus one grade or score is given.

exposition--writing that explains, analyzes, and informs. Definition, classification, process, cause and effect, and other techniques may be used for exposition.

form--the "shape," development, or organization of a piece of writing, based on the writer's purpose and ideas. Frequently used forms include extended analogy, analysis, cause and effect, classification, comparison/contrast, deduction, definition, example, induction, and narration. Often, a paper contains not one but several different forms.

freewriting--a prewriting technique whose goal is for students to get something on paper. The writer is given a specific time period and instructed not to stop writing until time is up. Topics or starters may or may not be given. The "rules" of freewriting force students to keep writing even if it's only to write "I can't think of anything to write."

grammar--a term with several connotations and denotations. It may refer to the underlying structure of a language (those characteristics of the language that children pick up naturally just from hearing the language spoken) or to the description of the structure of a language. In addition, grammar is sometimes used interchangeably with the word usage, which refers to commonly agreed-upon "rules" for using the language in particular situations or contexts. In the past, teachers have sometimes thought they were teaching writing when what they were actually teaching was usage or "correctness." Usage exercises do not significantly improve students' writing.

heuristic--any device or strategy to foster discovery about a topic.

intervention--any action on the part of a teacher or peer to step in and guide a student's writing process while the student is still working on an assignment. This may be achieved through conferences, classroom instruction, the teacher's formal or informal response to the student's writing, or peer response.

invention--term from classical rhetoric referring to the generation of ideas. It is sometimes used interchangeably with the term **prewriting**.

journals--writers' notebooks that serve several purposes in a writing classroom: a vehicle for writing in a nonthreatening situation; a place for prewriting; a source of topics, material, or ideas to be developed in later essays.

looping--a prewriting activity that begins with a specific topic on which a student writes nonstop for five minutes without making any corrections. After reading what has

rewriting--a term denoting both the revision and the editing stages of composing.

rhetoric--a word that carries considerable baggage. In classical times, it referred to the art of persuasion. Today, as then, lay people frequently use the term pejoratively to denote deceptive, pompous, flowery, superficial, or meaningless language (e.g., "Don't pay any attention to what the politicians say; it's mere rhetoric"). Writing specialists, however, use the word as a synonym for "discourse," "the teaching or study of writing," or writing itself.

thesis--the writer's central idea; the message the writer tries to convey. A thesis may be stated (usually in the introduction or conclusion) or implied.

trait scoring--see evaluation.

transitions--words or devices that link and define the relationship between sentences, ideas, or paragraphs.

writer's block--a state of anxiety or fear of putting words down that inhibits the writer's attempts to write.

writing--sometimes called drafting, writing is the stage between prewriting and revising in the composing process. The term designates the physical act of expressing a message in words, even if the composing is done on a word processor. While the general public may confuse writing with hand-

writing, or the size and shape of letters on the page, specialists realize that writing is much, much more than how the individual letters look on the page.

writing process--researchers have described the sequential stages that many trained writers follow in producing a piece of writing. Some authorities specify three stages (prewriting, writing, rewriting) while others name five or more (prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, publishing). Usually, the differences in terminology are merely semantic. Writers generally find composing easier if they attempt one step at a time, but since writing is recursive, they may momentarily move back and forth between steps at any point in the process.



SPECIAL FEATURES

THE TEACHER ROUND TABLE: Teachers and administrators "speak out" on an issue related to the focus of the *Write Angles* newsletter.

THE TEACHER EXCHANGE: Class-tested strategies for teaching composition, K-12, contributed by teachers.

The Round table and Teacher exchange will be regular features of each *Write Angles*.

A GLOSSARY OF USEFUL TERMS ABOUT COMPOSITION AND COMPOSITION TEACHING

WE WANT...

your comments and suggestions for making *Write Angles* even more useful to you. Send your suggestions to:

Dr. Gratia Murphy and Dr. Gary Salvner, Co-Editors
Write Angles
Department of English
Youngstown State University
Youngstown, OH 44555

VISITOR'S GUIDE

PURPOSE: To have students write clear directions to an audience unfamiliar to the school.

PREPARATION: Prepare a worksheet that lists several topics:

1. What to Do in Case of an Emergency (weather, fire alarm, etc.)
2. Where to Find Telephones, Rest Rooms, Drinking Fountains
3. Where to Go for Lunch, etc.

PRESENTATION:

Imagine that a group of students will be visiting your school on Saturday to take a test, be in a competition, etc. Your purpose is to write out directions for them on one of the topics listed above, to serve as a guide for them while they are in your school. Remember that they are unfamiliar with your school, so make the directions explicit.

Divide the class into groups. Assign each group one particular section of the visitor's guide. After brainstorming, each group will write a paragraph clearly explaining how to evacuate the school, how to find telephones, etc.

After the groups are finished, trade explanations and read for clarity and completeness. Make suggestions for revisions.

Type up directions on a "Visitor's Guide" Sheet that could be left in the classroom for visitors.

Adapted from an idea by Ruth Vukovich, Hubbard High School

PROGRAMMING A ROBOT

PRESENTATION:

The teacher tells the class to assume that science has finally perfected a robot that looks like a human being and can do everything human beings can do. There is one problem: the robot has to be told exactly what to do. It knows literally nothing about the little tasks we perform half automatically every day. Tell the robot exactly what to do when performing tasks such as the following:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| —combing its hair | —brushing teeth |
| —washing its face | —putting on a jacket |
| —putting on shoes and socks | —eating a piece of pizza |

WRITING: Students write out instructions in logical, complete order.

REVISING: Assign one student to "be" the robot while the other reads the instructions aloud. The robot may do only what he/she is told. Make additions/ corrections as needed.

Adapted from an idea by Charlotte Burt, Western Reserve High School

"HOW DO I KNOW WHAT I THINK TILL I SEE WHAT I SAY?": IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING THE WRITING PROCESS

What does it mean to teach "the writing process"?

First, it means that we must give our students time to struggle through various stages of the writing process--time to think, to plan, to make false starts; time for ideas to incubate; time to be stumped and move on; time to put the writing aside, to reread, and revise; time to proofread and edit. In other words, we can't assign a paper this morning and expect a final product this afternoon. A single assignment might be scheduled over a period of several days or even weeks, permitting students to work at their separate, individual paces.

Second, we must give our students space--space to move around, to pace the floor, to get away from their writing. As Donald Murray points out, if we ourselves can't write in libraries, we shouldn't expect our students to. Instead, we should encourage them "to move around in the writing workshop, to pace, twitch, mutter to themselves, hurl paper into the wastebasket" (*Reinventing* 71). Restricting students physically may restrict them mentally as well.

Third, we must provide the sense of "community" that we ourselves enjoy. When we have something to write, we talk with colleagues. We ask whether our writing is effective. The classroom environment should encourage similar interaction among students. Ann E. Berthoff suggests that the composition classroom should be "a forum, a culture circle, a theatre, a version of Tolstoy's armchair as warm with children questioning, talking and arguing" (*Reinventing* 78). And, of course, in addition to peer response, we must provide our own feedback, too--as we circulate around the classroom, in teacher-student conferences, and in formal responses to students' drafts.

Fourth, we must offer active instruction at every stage of the writing process. We must teach students to get something down, even if it's bad. We must tell them how we and other writers overcome "writer's block," how we step back from a draft to determine what an audience will find ambiguous or unclear. We must provide specific criteria by which they can evaluate their own drafts and the drafts of others. And we must keep our signals straight. If we expect students to believe that a draft is a means to an end, and not an end in itself, we must not put grades on rough drafts.

Fifth, we must teach our students what writing is: a way of solving problems; a way of discovering what they know, feel, and think about a particular topic; a way of learning. We must allow them to flounder, to change directions in the

middle of an assignment, to start over. We can't expect a final outline, or even a final thesis, before they've experienced the joy of discovery.

And finally, we must recognize the individual needs of our students. Students may not be helpful audiences unless we teach them how to respond to the writing of their peers. Some students may be able to write successful papers without going through as many drafts as we assign. The prewriting strategies that work for one student may not work for another, and so on. Teaching the writing process, then, is teaching writing as it really occurs.

WE NEED YOU...

to answer the featured question for the March issue of *Write Angles*, which focuses on collaborative learning and teaching.

Send a short response (50-75 words) to the following question:

What papers or projects in or out of school do you remember creating with another person or with other people? What do you remember most about the process? About what you created?

Send to:

Dr. Gary Salvner & Dr. Gratia Murphy, Co-Editors
Write Angles
Department of English
Youngstown State University
Youngstown, OH 44555

Deadline: January 25, 1989

TEACHER ROUND TABLE

Trumbull County Teachers Speak Out. This Month's Question: *How would you describe your own writing process?*

*I'd like to say that Danielle Steele and I are a lot alike when it comes to our "dashing off another novel" techniques. Unfortunately, though, probably the only things we have in common are the holey bathrobes and old flannel nightgowns we wear as we compose--she in her den, I at the kitchen table in the wee hours of the night, drinking coffee to stay awake and munching on Oreo cookies with the filling missing.

Judith Sable--Brookfield High

*I scribble ideas on used envelopes, old grocery lists, folded sheets of paper, and even, occasionally, blank notebook pages. After gathering all my scraps together, I escape to the side porch, climb into my tilt-back chair, sip a cup of something, and sit in total silence. Then, I call friends, colleagues, and others to talk out my half-formed ideas. Part of the compassion I feel for my students is a direct result of the difficulty I experience getting started.

Dorothy Gessler--Roosevelt Elementary

*Prewriting is an important component of the writing process. When I write, I have to "play around" several times before I get to the finished product. I think kids need this "fooling around" time, too.

Linda M. Carbone--Cortland Elementary

*Faced with a writing task, I generally "discuss" the topic with myself. In other words, I think it over, and in my mind I try out several beginnings. If I have time, I "write" the paper in my mind for several days. . . . After I actually start writing, I'm paranoid about overlooking a misspelled word and forgetting a comma. I don't ask anyone to read the paper until I feel I have revised it to the point of a final draft.

Karen Richardson--La Brae High

*I'm a brainstormer from way back. I have to jot down a lot of ideas and begin many times. After writing down all I can think of, I go to other sources or authorities, depending on the subject. After I accumulate a lot of "stuff," I read over what I have, throw out what I don't like, edit, and rewrite.

Diane Schmidt--Badger Middle

*I write down phrases about the subject, try to organize the phrases by putting them together if they're similar or connected, and then put the phrases in sequential order. I keep going back and rereading what I've written and usually insert things I think might go with particular points. I guess this is a sort of outline. Then, I usually try to think of a good sentence to begin the paper. This is hard, but I keep rereading what I've written until I come up with a beginning.

Lucy Setz--Summit Elementary

*A great deal of my prewriting takes place in the shower. . . or even worse, when I'm driving!

Connie Keyser--Newton Falls High

*I need to live with my ideas and mull them over in my mind before I begin to put them on paper. Often, I turn on the stereo and tackle some mindless household task that frees my head for some creative thinking.

Inez Shallenberger--Lakeview High

*The introductory paragraph is always the most difficult for me. I may write my entire piece and then go back to work on the beginning.

Joyce Manning--Cortland Elementary



*My greatest problem is being too conscious of the fact that since I am an English teacher, people expect my writing to be flawless. I therefore spend too much time trying to make my papers flawless, which interferes with the flow of my ideas.

Janine Harrison--Liberty High

*After I decide how to address the issue, I write phrases I want to be sure to include in my writing. The rest of my "think time" is spent agonizing over the OPENER. I get extremely hung up on grabbing the reader's attention right away!

Janet Micheltree--Stevenson Elementary

*Revising my papers is the hardest part. Deciding what to change and how to make things better takes a lot of time--and makes me realize the struggle my students go through.

Lynda Kane--Bristol High

*Usually my drafts look more and more like road maps--arrows and circles that move sentences from one place to another, detours or road blocks indicating awkwardly worded phrases or dead-ends. . . . In class, I try to write along with my students to show them the "mess" that goes before the finished product.

Sally Berkhouse--Champion High

*I always consider my initial writing a first draft so that I have an uninterrupted flow of thought. I scribble alternative ideas above the original, circle any words I want to reevaluate, use arrows to move a sentence or idea into

(continued)

proper sequence, and eventually cross out redundant or unnecessary words.

Patricia Shehabi--Howland High

*Above all, through my whole writing process I need "quiet" time, plus an atmosphere that allows me to reread my writing aloud to myself--I need to hear what it says.

Bonnie Miller--Lakeview Middle School

*I compose a rough draft with the thought that some of my ideas will have to be omitted. I always introduce more ideas than I hope to use in a final draft.

Jerry Stevens--Champion High

*Taking advantage of my word processor, I type in what I think of as fast as I can go. Then, I look it over on the screen and correct the errors I notice right away. I may move sentences or paragraphs at this time also. Next, I print out a copy and reread it. After letting it "rest" for a while, I pick it up and mark any errors on the hard copy. Finally, I boot up again, make any changes, and print out a finished copy.

Maranel Tallman--Vaughn Elementary

*Mentally, I count back from the time the writing is due to determine when I must actually begin. Until that pressure builds, I can't write. . . . After going through the whole writing process, I turn the paper in, knowing it would have been really good if only I had had another day or week or the relatives hadn't come.

Ruth Vukovich--Hubbard High

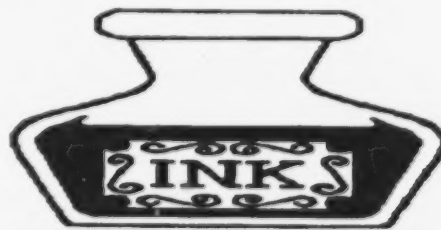
WHEN A WRITER CAN'T WRITE: OVERCOMING WRITER'S BLOCK

In *When a Writer Can't Write*, Mike Rose distinguishes between those "productive challenges" we all face at critical points in the composing process and "writer's block," a pronounced inability to write. We experience the former when we struggle to tame ideas that rush through our minds more quickly than we can sort them out, when we wrestle with structuring what we want to say, when we can't quite retrieve the word on the tip of our tongues. Such moments are normal--and for productive writers usually lead to more clearly conceived ideas and, ulti-

mately, better writing. For some writers, however, such moments can be terrifying, leading not to greater productivity but to writer's block. Stymied, the victim of writer's block becomes more and more anxious, more and more incapable of getting past whatever caused the block.

Researchers have noted that the people most likely to suffer from writer's block are those who are overly concerned with mechanical matters such as spelling and punctuation. But other factors, too, can thwart the ability to write. An exaggerated need to meet the expectations of ourselves or others, tasks too monumental or undefined for us to comprehend and master, too much or too little attachment to our writing, apathy, and boredom--all of these can lead to writer's block. Rose and other authorities suggest a number of strategies for helping our students overcome writer's block. With freewriting, for example, we ask the student "just to write"--about any subject, for a set length of time, without constraints of correct spelling and mechanics. Sometimes the physical act of writing builds the momentum the writer needs. As students gain a sense of power over the writing process, they will be less likely to block.

For a fuller discussion of writer's block and methods of treating it, see Rose's book. Most experts seem to agree that one of the best preventive medicines for writer's block is simply making our students aware that anxiety, procrastination, and fear are normal. If we remove as many of the causes of anxiety as possible, and if we familiarize our students with the tools of the writing process, their bouts with writer's block should become less debilitating and less frequent.



Activities to Encourage Creativity and Language Awareness in Young Children

Alternating Story Lines Have two children write a story together, each child contributing every other line. This can be done as a large-group activity.

Marathon Writing Child is given a time limit in which to write. At the end of the time, the number of words are counted. Content is not commented upon. This motivates reluctant writers. Content will eventually improve.

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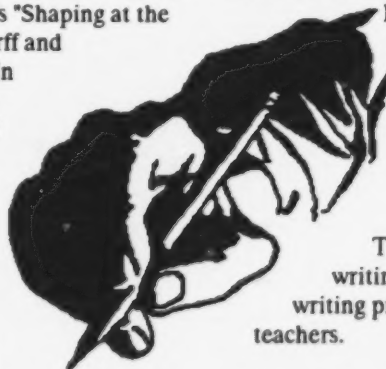
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(continued)



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Activities to Encourage Creativity and Language Awareness in Young Children

Comic Strips Select a favorite comic strip, and cut out all the words spoken by the characters, leaving blank "bubbles." Children create their own stories by writing in words.

Writing Roulette Both teacher and students write. The teacher gives the following directions: "We are all going to write anything we want for a short period of time. If you cannot think of anything to write about, just select a word that you like and write it over and over again. But whatever you do, keep writing. Do not stop until the bell rings." The timer should be set for three minutes. At the end of three minutes, all writers stop whether they are in mid-sentence or not. The papers are then redistributed and the following directions are given: "Read what is on the paper you received and begin writing where the first writer left off. Write until the bell rings." The timer is then set for four minutes. Ideally, the papers will be exchanged three or four times. To take the exercise one step further, on another day the students can rewrite the paper to which they were the final contributor, making it as interesting as they possibly can.

Some Final Thoughts... The Writing Process

"It is our job as teachers of writing to create a context that is as appropriate for writing as the gym is for basketball."

Donald M. Murray, "First Silence, Then Paper," in *Forum*

"I see the developed writing process as one of hearing an inner voice dictating forms of the written language appropriate to the task at hand."

James Britton, in *Reinventing the Rhetorical Tradition*

Writing badly . . . is a crucial part of learning to write well. Indeed, regressing and falling apart are a crucial and usually necessary part of any complex learning."

Peter Elbow, *Writing Without Teachers*

"Often I have to write badly to write well. My students want to write too well, too early."

Donald M. Murray, "The Feel of Writing--and Teaching Writing," in *Reinventing the Rhetorical Tradition*

"There's something marvelously satisfying about finishing a draft, no matter how bad it is. Now I can go to work."

Donald M. Murray, in *Reinventing the Rhetorical Tradition*

"When we teach revision as a phase of the composing process, we are teaching just that--re-seeing the ways out of chaos."

Ann E. Berthoff, in *Reinventing the Rhetorical Tradition*

"Rewriting is the essence of writing."

William Zinsser, *On Writing Well*

"Writing is a powerful, enabling, distinctively human activity without which there is inadequate opportunity for students to make sense out of their world and their places in it."

Gratia Murphy and Gary Salvner, *Teacher to Teacher*

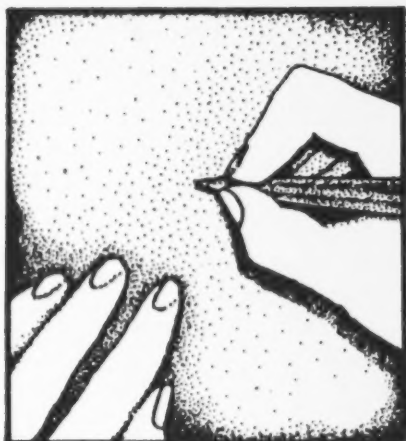
WRITE ANGLES



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Becoming a Writer

In 1508, Erasmus, a Dutch scholar, said, "The desire to write grows with writing." This simple, logical statement has many implications for us educators who are dismayed that many of our students are leaving our school systems with inadequate writing skills. We ask ourselves, "Where did we fail?" and "What could we have done differently?" In order to answer some of our questions, we have to understand what is meant by writing ability and examine how such ability grows.

All theories of development include the notion that we grow and develop gradually, and this development is, among other things, physical, mental, and aesthetic. The process begins on the first day of our lives and does not stop until we do. Writing is no different from other developmental processes in these regards. Children begin to develop by experimenting with writing as soon as they can hold a pencil or crayon. As they mature and are given direction, they attempt experiments and trials which are increasingly more complex, and they grow in their abilities each time they attempt and conquer a new problem or challenge in writing. Since writing is so diverse in its purposes and so complex, these experiments and trials continue throughout life. Writing development, in other words, never stops.

Knowing that practice is crucial to development, elementary teachers have frequently had their students write, but many times little importance was placed on these early writings, either by teachers or administrators. Often these first attempts were seen as "cute" but insignificant because they lacked polished form and style. Since almost no elementary teachers were trained in either writing instruction or assessment, many came to believe that writing was not in their realm, and they opted instead to leave the teaching of writing to secondary English teachers.

Fortunately, the notion that the teaching of writing should begin at the secondary level is now being actively questioned. Just as students develop physically, so do they develop in their understanding and usage of writing skills. According to Eileen Tway of Miami University of Ohio, "The development of writing follows the development of speech. . . [C]urrent research shows that children go through several developmental stages in writing during preschool years." Children will first scribble, for example, then write a few letters, then sentences. Naturally, they are proud of these first writing accomplishments and are eager to read these first messages to anyone who will listen. They continue beyond these first attempts because someone continues to look, listen, and invariably praise them for their work.

When children enter school, however, writing many times becomes a chore. Spontaneity often disappears because teachers are concerned with penmanship, which they label "writing," and with the writing of specific words, or kinds of

(continued)

*"The desire to
write grows with
writing."
Erasmus
(adagia 1508)*

sentences, and paragraphs until fears arise of "Can I write what the teacher wants to see?", "How will I begin?", or "What will I do if I can't think and write in twenty minutes?" Sometimes these fears never go away, and children lose the sense of discovery, creativity and delight they once had in writing.

We, as teachers, need to keep the excitement for writing alive. Primary students have wonderful ideas, and so we need to provide various means for them to express them. They may write a story about their families or their pets, a thank you note, a letter to a classmate who is ill, a poem, a book report. Granted, these writings may not have every word correctly spelled or every punctuation mark in its proper place, but these beginning writings are invaluable to show students how they can put their thoughts on paper and

perhaps discover something new about their world and even about themselves.

In the middle school or the junior high, the development of writing should be continued by reinforcing and extending the writing experiences students have had in elementary school; these experiences include the formation of new and varied sentences, handling conventions of grammar and usage, and use of broader vocabulary. As teachers, we should never assume that a child knows a skill so well that practice in it is not called for. Students should be introduced to ways of developing longer pieces of discourse, ones that address varied audiences and purposes. Working on different ways of organizing material, of making effective closures to pieces or openings for essays can be done here. Opportunities for student writing are likely to be more varied at this level simply because the students are developing in their realms of experience and knowledge. Narratives, stories of personal experiences, reports from various subject areas they are studying at the time, journals, poetry and other creative writing provide different ways for students to explore their own world and the world around them through writing. This is sometimes easier said than done. Several conditions need to be taken into consideration for successful writing at this level. Students need to be given legitimate reasons for writing, adequate time for writing, and varying audiences to write for and direction in how to accomplish these things. Given enough of these opportunities, students will actually see their writing skills improving—a fact that will encourage them even more.

When students are in high school, they should be broadening their writing experiences and abilities even more. Not only should they be addressing different audiences—even those who are hostile or indifferent—but also they should be trying new forms of discourse: persuasion, argumentation, exposition, and even challenges that call for them to use critical thinking about their own knowledge and experiences. As they widen their writing tasks, they can further their own written styles by experimenting with new vocabulary, new modes of arrangement, new tones or voices to write with and in. They use the writers' resources (the dictionary, thesaurus, handbook, etc.) more independently and confidently. If these writing experiences are challenging, yet satisfying, young writers are likely to admit that "I like to write because I don't like to talk that much, so I relate my words in writing" or "I can unclutter my thoughts by writing them down" or even "It's fun to write; I never thought it would be!" These comments are from high school students who have been lucky enough to have been encouraged by teachers who made writing real, who inspired, who praised, and who made known to students the importance of written expression.

That the teaching of writing, then, should begin in kindergarten—or even before—is a reality that has been too long in coming. Language development occurs as students use language actively to seek and make meaning

Write Angles Staff

Writers:

Juanita Barber—E. J. Blott Elementary School, Liberty
Sally Berkhouse—Champion High School
Joyce Manning—Cortland Elementary School
Emily Price—Brookfield Junior High School
Camille Sheely—Warren Western Reserve High School
Dr. Virginia Monseu—Youngstown State University

Contributors:

Virginia Baran—Howland Glen Primary School
Eileen Kolat—Hubbard High School
Maranel Tallman—Vaughn Building, La Brae
Virginia Selanik—Warren G. Harding High School

Co-Editors:

Dr. Gary Salvner—Youngstown State University
Dr. Gratia Murphy—Youngstown State University

Graphics:

Elayne M. S. Klovis

Production Editor:

Mark Haverstock

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through reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Because language is the medium of instruction not only throughout the school experience but also across the curriculum, teachers at all grade levels and in all subject areas need to come together to see how language is used everywhere. Open communication with teachers across and up and down the curriculum is necessary to further the development of language skill in a school system.

We all have had experiences which have taught us personally how important writing is in our lives. Through our own experiences and anecdotal evidence of the importance of writing, we try to convince our students of its worth and importance to them. The teaching of writing is a challenge we must all undertake, for the benefits of being literate are innumerable. Writing is energizing, "pleasure-full," constructive, and empowering; it is one of the few things in life that an individual has complete authority over.

DID YOU KNOW...?

*Students will write more effectively if, before actual writing begins, they engage in prewriting activities such as role playing, debating, or discussing a topic.

*If grammar is taught in conjunction with writing, instruction in grammar has a positive effect on writing.

*There is evidence that sentence-combining activities, without instruction in the grammatical theory that lies behind them, will aid in developing syntactic fluency.

*Revisions of previous assignments make excellent writing opportunities.

*The most successful teachers of writing do not make a separation between the content and form of a paper.

*Conferences (even one-minute ones!) are the best way to give students advice on their writing and, consequently, to help them with revisions.

*Students with only positive comments on papers wrote more than students who received no comments or negative ones.

*Several findings suggest that increased reading results in improved writing. Therefore, it would seem advisable to incorporate a greater number of reading experiences into the writing program than has usually been done.

*Peer evaluation and help with editing improve writing skills and make writers better readers and editors of their own work.

Students benefit most from writing frequently, even though all of what is written need not be graded. However, there does need to be some sort of response—either from the teacher or from a peer—to a piece of writing.

The more specific the assignment, and the clearer the purpose and audience of the assignment are, the better the performance of the writer will be on the assignment.



When most people think of writing they see words on a page, all neatly ordered, marching towards a meaning. When writers think of writing, they see a blank page, and they see what was before the blank page.

Donald Murray

There is no right way. Each of us finds a way that works for him. But there is a wrong way. The wrong way is to finish your writing day with no more words on the paper than when you began. Writers write.

Robert Parker

When children write on an assigned topic and get their papers back covered with red ink, their writing doesn't even seem to belong to them. They don't care to improve it.

When children are allowed to make choices in their writing, they demonstrate the ability to choose and to learn from their choices, good or bad. They can find their own topics and make their own revisions.

Write From The Start by Donald Graves and Virginia Stuart

Tall Tales

Purpose: To provide opportunities to write and read tall tales.

Preparation: Prepare "Story Starter Wheels" (as shown on pg. 5)

Presentation: Put students into three groups and have each group work with one of the "Story Starter Wheels." Members of each group can divide into pairs and work together on one of the story starters. Student pairs can then compose a story to be read to the class.

These "Story Starter Wheels" can also be used as part of a creative writing station. A student could then choose his own story starter to get an idea for his tale.

Source: Lucy Setz, Summit School, Girard. Adapted from Ethel Breyfogle and Sue Nelson, *Creating a Learning Environment, a Learning Center Handbook*. Santa Monica, CA: Goodyear Publishing Co., 1976.

Space Adventure

Purpose: To have children generate ideas from a story about space.

Preparation: 9 x 12 construction paper, any color, folded in half
pictures of various pieces of luggage, mounted on posterboard
paper copies of suitcase handles, labels, and keys

Presentation: After reading a space-related story, have children brainstorm about items found in the solar system (planets, moons, stars, satellites, etc.). Tell students to imagine they are aboard a space shuttle flight bound for _____. Ask students to write a description of what is inside their suitcase or why they packed a certain item and how they will use it when they reach their destination.

Additional

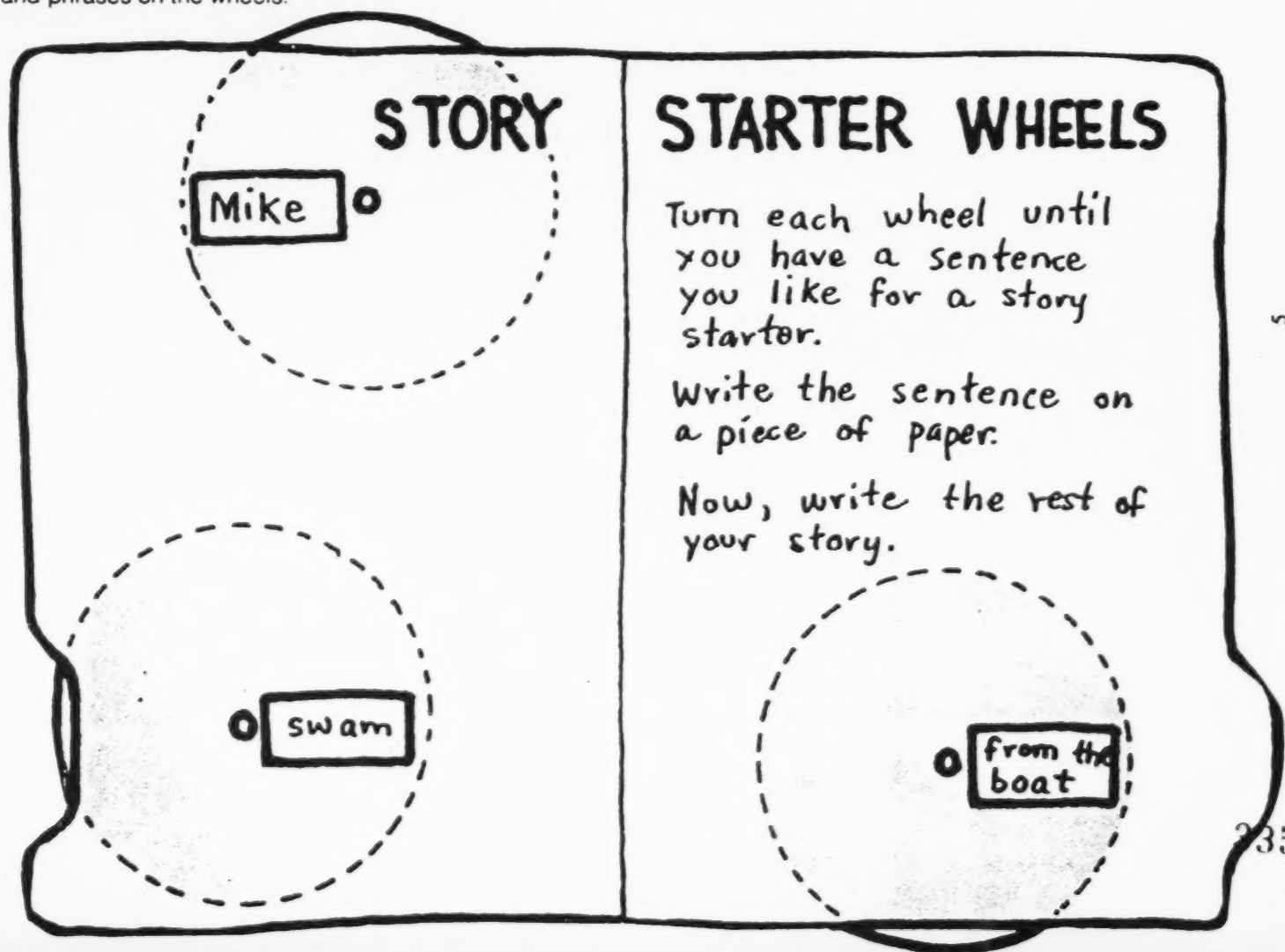
Comments: Prepare a bulletin board to display the stories. Students can paste stories inside the "suitcases," which can be decorated with labels, handles, keys, etc.

Source: Janet Mitcheltree, Stevenson Elementary School



Construction

In a manila file folder, cut three 2" x 3/4" windows as shown. Cut three tagboard circles of 5" diameter. Use paper fasteners to mount the circles behind the windows in the folder as shown. Use felt-tip pen to write instructions on the folder. On the top wheel write noun phrases. On the middle wheel write verb phrases. On the last wheel write prepositional phrases and/or objects. Prepare three such folders using different words and phrases on the wheels.



Information/Interview

Purpose: To elicit information from individuals by using interview techniques.

Preparation: Students write a paragraph about an individual, reporting what they already know about him or her.

Next, formulate possible interview questions. Set limitations on the questions. (See idea boxes at the bottom of the page.) Students may want to consider other questions in addition to those in the idea boxes.

Presentation: Have students write a paragraph in which they report the new information about the person they thought they knew pretty well.

Source: Emily Price, Brookfield Junior High.

Some of my classmates have interesting hobbies. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	Some of my classmates are athletic. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	Some of my classmates are concert-goers. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.
Some of my classmates have taken interesting vacations. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	Different kinds of music are liked by my classmates. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	My classmates belong to clubs. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.
Some of my classmates have pets. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	Some of my classmates have after-school summer jobs. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	My classmates have had embarrassing moments. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

The Nose Knows

Purpose: To have students use their sense of smell to develop descriptive paragraphs.

Preparation: Dixie cups, covered with foil, filled with:
spices
lotions
small fruit sections
small vegetable sections
all manner of smellable objects
Number cups on the bottom.
Make a keyed list of the contents
List of adjectives describing various smells

Presentation: Start the paper cups around the room. Have the students number their papers and try to identify each smell. After each student has tried to identify each cup, compare notes. Brainstorm together as a class adjectives for several of the contents.

Give each student a cup of his or her own.

Using both the brainstorming list and your list of adjectives, have each one write a descriptive paragraph.

Paragraphs can be read aloud and other students can guess what's being described.

Source: Cheryl Fimognari, Brookfield High School
Adapted from teacher notes for McDougal Littell's *Building English Skills*, Grade 7, Chapter 4, copyright 1984.

Copywrite

Purpose: To enhance students' comprehension and appreciation of the language used in a literary piece.
To aid students' ability to write descriptive composition and make careful word choices when doing so.
To stimulate students' creativity in using language to express their thoughts.

Preparation: Select a short, descriptive passage from a prose piece or a descriptive poem. An overhead projector or chalk board may be used for the presentation.

Presentation: Present to the students the chosen selection. Read the passage aloud. While taking a look at the first sentence of the passage or the first line of the poem, ask students for suggestions as to what words might be deleted and replaced by others. Then allow a student to read the altered portion of the selection. Continue this procedure through the end of the excerpt or the poem. Upon completion, designate one student or have the entire class participate in reading the revised piece aloud. Following the reading, lead a class discussion on the importance of word choice when conveying thoughts and ideas in writing. Impress upon students the need for good diction in order to *best* express themselves.

Additional Comments: This activity could be followed by a descriptive writing assignment.

I was first introduced to this exercise while attending the Y.S.U. English Festival this past spring. During one of the sessions held for teachers, Dr. Dunning from the University of Michigan presented this activity. I then tried this with my class the following week. The results were both exciting and motivating.

Source: Janine Harrison, Liberty High School

Teaching Idea for *The Diary of Anne Frank*

Purpose: To show that descriptions of events change depending upon the point of view of the narrator.

Preparation: Read the play, *The Diary of Anne Frank*.

Presentation: After reading the play, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, have students describe Anne's point of view in her diary entries. Then have students write a diary entry from the point of view of one of the other characters in the play. Discuss how these points of view resemble and/or differ from Anne's.

Additional

Comments: This could be adapted for other literary works.

Source: Rona Kaniewski, Champion Middle School

Silent Exchange

Purpose: To help students develop the specific skills of observing, following directions, expressing clearly, and describing.

Preparation: Duplicate the "Silent Exchange" sheet.

Presentation: Organize the students into equal numbered rows. Tell the students they are to read *all* the directions before starting and that they are to follow them exactly.

Additional

Comments: Be ready with your pencil to respond to questions.

Source: Chris Sager, Lordstown High School

Silent Exchange

Everything you do from this point on will be in writing. No one is allowed to speak until I give the signal ten minutes before the end of the period. Read the following directions carefully. *If you don't understand something, write your question on a piece of paper and hand it to me. I will respond in writing.*

1. Get a sheet of paper from your notebooks for *each* student in your row, excluding yourself. List *four or five* questions on *each* sheet. Ask questions that will help you to describe that person--hobbies, interests, goals, family, good/bad habits, or temperament (easy-going or explosive). Ask different questions on each sheet, *but do ask everybody at least one question that is the same*. Provide a blank for the receiver to write his/her first and last name. Write your name at the bottom of the sheet so that it may be returned to you.
2. When you finish the questionnaires, give one to each person in your row.
3. When the questionnaires are returned, read the answers and look for similarities and differences among the students in your row.
4. Begin by writing an original and interesting introductory paragraph about the people in your row in general.
5. Now describe each person in a separate paragraph. Be creative.
6. After you have described each person, close with a paragraph which summarizes what you have learned about the people in your row.
7. Think of an appropriate title. This will be your rough draft.
8. Your rough draft with questionnaire sheets attached is due at the beginning of the period tomorrow.
9. Steps one and two must be completed in class today. Steps three through eight will be completed for homework.
10. During the next few days, we will work with your rough draft and you will produce a final copy. You will then present this orally to the class.

Cyrano de Bergerac

Purpose: To have students look at language and the importance of language.

Preparation: Read *Cyrano de Bergerac* and watch the movie. You may also want to watch the movie, *Roxanne*.

Presentation: Students could work in groups of four, two in each group composing a letter to Roxanne from Christian as he might write it without Cyrano's help, and two composing a letter to Roxanne from Christian written for him by Cyrano. Compare the styles of the letters.

Additional

Comments: This activity could be adapted to reading and writing about any fictional selection.

Source: Carol Pinney, Hubbard High School

The Teacher Roundtable

Question: What person or experience helped me to become a reader and/or writer?

My uncle played the ultimate trick on me—he bought me a crossword puzzle book when I was in first grade. How could I play this marvelous game (hard cover, large words and squares, probably 3rd grade level) if I couldn't read?

Charlotte Sirianni, Brookfield Junior High School

The Bobbsey Twins Solve a Mystery was the first book I remember reading in elementary school. It was a gift from an elderly neighbor; she was the catalyst, the motivator who got me to read many of this particular series. Later, in third grade, Nancy Drew mysteries were read aloud by my teacher, and that prompted me to read most of that series. Thanks to Mrs. Richards and Miss Brown!

Beverly Barile, Warren G. Harding High School

My mother—she read to me every day and provided opportunity and always read "my stories."

Joyce Tupper, E.J. Blott Elementary School

The person who helped me most to become a reader and a writer is Dr. H. Thomas McCracken, a professor at Youngstown State University. His knowledge concerning so many subjects challenged me to want that same information for myself. The

way he was able to relate all elements of learning to all else in the universe was a style worth contemplating and a skill worth having.

Cheryl Fimognari, Brookfield Junior High School

A dear, sweet nun used to read stories to us while we were cooling off after recess. Often we were allowed to take the book home, overnight, to share with our families.

Joseph D. Casagrande, Trumbull County Office of Education

In elementary school the children's librarian would come to each classroom with a few new book jackets periodically and generate interest and suspense about books—especially mysteries. She would also plug the summer reading program to encourage young readers.

Pat Mc Cutcheon, Champion High School

My parents initiated and nurtured my love of reading. I was given books as gifts from the time I was an infant. I was read to and had dozens of records. I still have books and records that I received when I was three years old. My father took me to the

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library regularly as I was growing up. Books were something I always cherished.

Don Rotar, Jr., Warren Western Reserve High School

My interest in reading was sparked by my sixth grade teacher who read to our class daily. She would select old favorites like *Alice in Wonderland* or *The Wind in the Willows*. But she also would read Nancy Drew and Hardy Boys mysteries. She always chose a stopping place that kept us anxiously awaiting the next day's reading.

Jean Ziegler, Brookfield Junior High School

Honestly, I don't know except that in Catholic school in the 1950s you read and wrote, like it or not—no T/F, no multiple guess, no fill in the blanks—no grading machines. I learned to write through necessity in graduate school—it was either do or die. As you can tell—I've never learned to punctuate.

Mary Alice Grace, Champion High School

Reading came as a natural activity from home at a very early age before I started school. I can still remember sitting on my father's lap and being read to and acting out the stories. I developed reading ability around age four. I remember going to the library for the first time, and my first library book was *Mac the Farmer*. Books and authors fascinated me since early childhood.

Shirley Bletsa, E.J. Blott Elementary School

The first eighteen years of my life I don't recall reading for pleasure except for the sports page or sports magazines—my reading was done for information acquisition rather than recreational reasons. Reading *Crime and Punishment* as a college freshman changed my attitudes forever. Dostoyevski and the authors who followed literally influenced my decisions about my career and my life.

Warne Palmer, Warren Western Reserve High School

I became an avid reader when I was a junior in high school because I was required to read classics. Had I not read these kinds of books, I believe that I would have had a very limited background of literature. I enjoyed the classics and wanted to read as often as possible.

Ramonda Rek, Champion High School

The first time I remember reading was after I read my first novel in fourth grade. My teacher had a small library in the back of her room. From then on I wanted to read. . . I loved being in the public library. . . I still do. My love of writing came from reading. I remember trying to write stories in junior high and, of course, I tried poetry in college.

Toni Murray, Warren Western Reserve High School

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The "Write" Environment

We can look at the development of students' writing from several viewpoints: from that of the parents who provide out-of-school reinforcement and encouragement; from that of the teachers who have responsibility for direct instruction and guidance; and from that of the administrators, who must provide the leadership and support a school writing program must have.

The Parents' Role

Even before children are formally enrolled in school, parents can begin laying the groundwork for successful writing experiences. Young children need praise, encouragement, and the gift of opportunities to develop their interest in words and language. Parents can provide their children with a variety of experiences, which are discussed together. They can then encourage the children to draw and "write" about these experiences. Parents, of course, can read stories to children, or play records and tapes, letting them listen to the sound of language in action. Because children love to imitate, parents need to let them see grownups writing, sharing with their children what they have written or

what others have written to them. Parents are powerful role models for children, and powerful allies in the learning process.

The Teachers' Role

Elementary teachers need to realize that the development of writing—which is so enjoyed by youngsters—must be continued and encouraged when children enter school. According to Donald Graves, four out of every five children in first grade said that they could write, even before instruction was given in it. Children in primary grades, and even kindergarten, need to have opportunities for doing what they know they have done for several years: telling stories in words, even if the "words" have invented spellings that the children alone are capable of deciphering. These first faltering efforts must be encouraged by positive feedback through the sharing of children's writing, and by allowing children frequent opportunities to engage in this creative work. Teachers need to listen attentively to what children say, and not be concerned only with the form in which it is said. As in any skill, mastery of the form will come with the

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desire and chance to engage in the activity.

By the later elementary years in school, teachers will have provided students with direction in the process of writing and in learning how to go from idea to final draft confidently and surely. Teachers of older students need to give young people increasingly more sophisticated writing tasks, with emphasis on a variety of purposes and situations. As students write, teachers will guide them in acquiring mastery of the conventions that those audiences require and need for effective communication.

The Administrators' Role

No role is more crucial to the establishment of a good school writing program than that of the administrator, who must support the school's efforts and the teachers' part in them. Because we know that writing is a powerful mode of learning, it should be incorporated into the instruction in every subject area: science, social studies, the arts, etc. Only by encouraging all teachers to assume responsibility for writing and for seeing that writing is a mode of instruction in all classes will a school program succeed. Secondly, the administrator must understand that writing can thrive only in an environment in which teachers' duties and course assignments are reasonable and equitable. Because the teaching of writing calls for special kinds of efforts, the administrator must be willing to see to it that class loads and assignments are not so overwhelming that those efforts cannot be made.

We Need You...

to answer the featured questions for the April and May issues of *Write Angles*.

Send a short response (50-75 words) to the following questions:

APRIL: *How has something you have read (essay, book, short story, poem or article) influenced a piece of your writing by providing a model, example, allusion, ideal, metaphor, style, organization, etc.?*

MAY: *What advice would you give new teachers to help them respond adequately to students' written work without getting buried in the paper load?*

Send to:

Dr. Gratia Murphy and Dr. Gary Salvner, Co-Editors
Write Angles
Department of English
Youngstown State University
Youngstown, OH 44555

Deadline: March 1, 1989



Why Children Write:

Children tell us they write

Because they must

They write to learn

They write to satisfy themselves

Students must be given opportunities to write. Neil Simon said, "In baseball you only get three swings and you're out. In rewriting, you get almost as many swings as you want and you know, sooner or later, you'll hit the ball."

Write Angles Project INTERACT

Newsletter of the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities and Public Policy

By Teacher

School-College Cooperation Urged

About This Newsletter

Responding to a marked increase in public concern for the quality of education in Virginia, and in particular to increased concern over the appropriate role of the humanities in a balanced curriculum, the Virginia Foundation devoted the Spring, 1984, edition of its regular Newsletter entirely to humanities and the secondary schools. Reaction to this newsletter from teachers, school administrators, college faculty, and the public suggested, first, a widespread need for information on the resources available to teachers at all levels. It further suggested that many Virginians are, or wish to be, actively engaged with issues relating to improved educational quality, and that they are willing to participate in a forum which addresses these issues directly.

The present newsletter is the second in a series concerned exclusively with education—with the humanities and the curriculum; with school/college cooperation; with issues affecting teachers, school systems, and the students they serve. Recent publications such as "To Reclaim a Legacy" by William Bennett, "Integrity in the College Curriculum" by the Committee of the Association of American Colleges, and the reports of the Federal Panel on Excellence in Education and the National Commission for Excellence in Teacher Education suggest that the debate over educational quality and priorities will continue. We hope that you will share this newsletter with others, both inside and outside the educational community. We also welcome your suggestions for encouraging cooperation and dialogue between Virginia's secondary school and college faculties; for improving the overall quality of education in the state; and for further integrating the humanities into the established curriculum.



Lydia Peale

Ms. Peale is a teacher in the Prince Edward County Schools.

The following is excerpted from an address by Lydia Peale presented at the tenth annual conference of the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities in Norfolk on September 15, 1984. It considers from a teacher's point of view both the problems and the opportunities involved in building school/college cooperation. The issues it raises are important ones for Virginia's future, suggesting the need for increased public dialogue. The Foundation hopes to encourage and facilitate discussion through this newsletter and invites considered responses to any of the ideas presented here.

I am here, not as an elected representative of all the teachers in Virginia, but because Dave Wyatt of the Foundation asked me to be on this panel when I was one of the participants in a month-long institute at U.Va. last summer, co-sponsored by the Virginia Foundation and the Carter Woodson Institute. We were a group of seventeen Virginia college and public school teachers learning about Black history and designing units to be used by state social studies teachers.

Dave gave me two directives on our topic. First, he asked me to speak from personal experience. Second, he wanted me to include whatever realistic barriers I saw in the way of collective education for schools and colleges. This I have tried to do.

First, let me give you some background on myself and my involvement with schools and colleges. I'm from Farmville and teach at Prince Edward County High School. I helped to develop and have taught for five years the English strand in an interdisciplinary humanities program which we offer

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Peale

Mutual Respect Is Basis Of Cooperation

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for accelerated students in grades 9-12. I have also taught in a New England public school, private day schools near large cities, a boarding school and two colleges, one of which is Longwood in Farmville. My husband teaches there, so I have many college contacts. I think I am atypical as a public school teacher because I have these contacts, and yet this fact points out a real problem area. I should *not* be atypical. There *should* be automatic, available ways that those of us in the same venture can know each other and frequently share ideas.

Something else that I think is unique is teaching in the public schools in Prince Edward County. Because of our past, with the touchiness of the public/private school issue, the area colleges really did not involve themselves very much with us until recent years. Some practice teachers were placed in our schools, but that was about all. However, the situation is turning around. The earliest direct contribution was Hampden-Sydney's letting high school students take free courses as long ago as eight or nine years. Longwood, in the last year or so, has used foundation money for tuition grants for high school students to enroll in courses, and also uses us for field experiences since its campus school closed in 1982. As well as offering courses, the colleges are wonderful resources for speakers, mentors, and special after school or Saturday morning classes for enrichment. As an example, I've used three college professors as speakers in my classes in the last two weeks: one was an archaeologist/anthropologist, one an expert in reading novels serially, and one a drama person who talked about the development of the Greek theatre as an introduction to my teaching *Oedipus Rex*. As another way colleges help schools in our community, Hampden-Sydney students have regularly functioned as tutors at the high school for the last two years; and next week the College is sponsoring a seminar on the Constitution and the Judiciary to which they've invited area high school students.

It seems to me that the first step in any joint venture is for both groups to realize a mutual need. What can we in the public schools give to colleges, and what can they do for us?

So these are some ways we've worked together at the local level. But what of larger questions of school/college relations? Why should teachers in schools and colleges want to cooperate? It seems to me that the first step in any joint venture is for both groups to recognize a mutual need. What can we in the public schools give to colleges, and what can they do for us? Obvious examples are colleges needing better prepared students and public schools needing the specialized expertise that college professors can bring to any area or discipline. The problem is that we often tend to criticize each other, and it's left at that. Colleges complain [for example] that their students are unprepared; their skills are weak; they

don't know how to study. But if we can communicate about needs, we can begin to work toward constructive solutions to the problem. With communication will come an understanding of what, in fact, each of us *does* and under what conditions we do it. How many college teachers know what it's like to teach five classes a day to 130 to 140 students with anywhere from two to five preparations each night, plus carry a myriad of bus duties, hall duties, lunch duties, game duties, home room duties, committee duties, and so on? And how many of us public school teachers, who look at a college

How many college teachers know what it's like to teach five classes a day with anywhere from two to five preparations each night, plus carry a myriad of other duties? And how many of us public school teachers who look at a college professor's teaching schedule and sigh with envy realize what pressures for advancement, tenure, and publication are like?

professor's teaching schedule (15 hours a week or less) and sigh with envy, realize what pressures for advancement, tenure, and professional growth, including publication, are like? So until we meet and talk, we can't know how we can work together. I think many high school teachers, for example, don't even have a clear idea of what skills and knowledge colleges want their entering freshmen to have. And what of the non college-bound public school students (which is 2/3 of each senior class in my school)? Do colleges have any connection with them? Won't they be part of the population making value judgements about the place of education in our society?

So if there is a need for us to be involved with each other, what's in the way? I will talk candidly about what I see as two main barriers inhibiting school/college cooperation. They are attitudinal, but they are real and powerful. One is a sense of superiority and one is a feeling of paranoia. There are too many college people who feel that they are superior—they know more than the high school teacher and should not be bothered with lower-level stuff. A college professor I know says that too many of his colleagues see high school teachers as "failed people"—people who, if they were good enough, would be college teachers. A clear example came from a friend who last summer taught one of the NEH Summer Seminars for High School Teachers. He was amazed in his training sessions for seminar leaders that some of these leaders looked upon the seminar solely as a chance to be paid to develop their own work, to have a captive audience. There was no feeling of mutual sharing—that these students as teachers might make contributions to the professor's own teaching. I don't know how widespread this attitude is, but it destroys the mutuality of need we're talking about.

From my own experiences I feel that public school teachers, especially elementary school teachers, have something to teach all of us about methodology and its importance. They know about different learning styles. They know about the levels of thinking and how to reach students on progressively higher levels. Some college professors, despite their content knowledge, may only challenge students at the cognitive level, rather than moving them to application, synthesis, analysis, and so forth.

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Peale...

Now to the second attitude which stands as a barrier to school/college cooperation. This is the paranoia (and I don't think it's too strong a word) that many public school teachers now feel in the light of recent critical reports of our schools and also in the light of the tightening up of requirements for both teachers and students. This paranoia is fed by frustration, confusion, and exhaustion. It goes something like this: "I am working very hard, with little compensation, little intrinsic reward, little community support, little prestige, at a job society has handed me. I am not only expected to present my academic subject, but to solve many of society's problems—such as financial, racial, and class inequality. Now you're telling me I'm doing a bad job, my students must learn more, I will be evaluated under new standards, and my job may be in jeopardy." This feeling to me is illustrated in the vehement opposition to teacher

competency testing by the NEA. There is the need to close ranks among ourselves, even protect our incompetent colleagues, in order to hold on to what we have. And to move back to school/college relations, the paranoid individual or profession may see in all outsiders, whether they come from a college or the State Education Department, an implicit criticism of what's now being done.

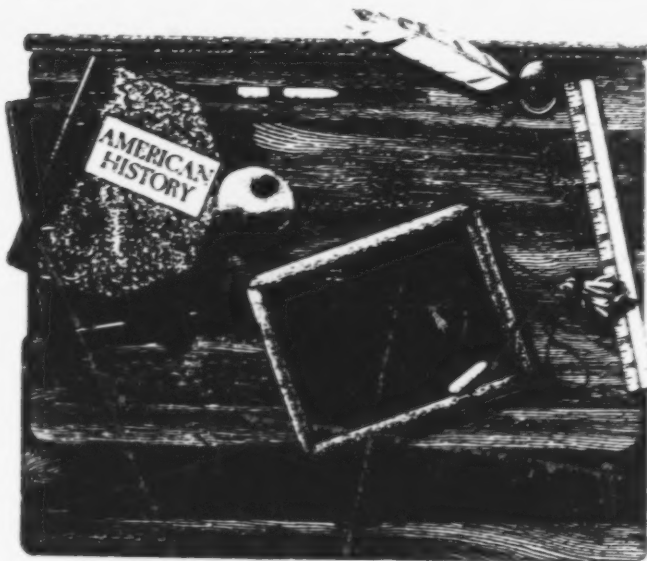
Despite these attitudes, what can be done? Communication and learning about each other as people and how we fit into the educational scheme need to take place *before*

There is a paranoia (and I don't think it's too strong a word) that many public school teachers now feel in light of recent critical reports of our schools. This paranoia is fed by frustration, confusion, and exhaustion.

New Program Described: *Models for Teaching the Humanities*

In the summer of 1985 the Virginia Foundation will sponsor a conference and workshop in cooperation with the Virginia Department of Education. The purpose of this program is to develop a core set of objectives and model program descriptions for teaching the humanities in high schools. Two approaches will be explored: 1) a single interdisciplinary course incorporating history, literature, art, music, and languages; 2) courses in each humanities discipline now taught in the schools but incorporating material from the other disciplines to broaden perspectives and enhance understanding of the cultural tradition.

The program will begin with a conference on July 8 for representatives from all school districts in Virginia. A keynote speaker and small group discussion will lay a foundation for the workshop which will continue through July 12. Fifteen teachers representing history, English, foreign languages, and the fine arts will be selected for the workshop. They will meet during the week with leading scholars to develop model curricula. These models will be reviewed by the school districts and then edited and printed for use in the high schools.



endeavors can begin. My feeling is that four elements are necessary:

- 1) The first is the genuine desire to learn from and give to each other—that is, that a need is perceived. How does this come about? It comes about through realistic assessment of what part *each* level plays in the total educational process and how we fit together. And this perhaps should be preceded by the second necessary element:
- 2) There must be trust and openness between parties. No group can feel put upon or used. Each must be respected by the other, not for the status of the level of teaching, but for the contribution made to the total process.
- 3) Third, there needs to be adequate time for cooperative efforts as well as a carefully thought-out structure. I think this means released time for meeting each other, deciding on needs and strengths, exploring options, and planning and training for joint ventures. Otherwise, any endeavor will be only another burden for already over-taxed teachers and administrators. And the structure: it needs to be carefully set in place before work begins. I have found myself in too many situations in which I had to organize and produce on my own in a situation in which there was little or no structure or direction from higher-up, and in which I had no sense of how what I was doing fit into the whole.
- 4) And finally, fourth, you need leadership who care, and who are willing to allow time and money for the structure to develop. Superintendents, presidents, principals, deans, curriculum specialists, heads of departments, and teachers all need to agree on goals and work toward them, all feeling a part of what's going on, or nothing will happen. The leaders must be perceived as intimately involved in the venture.

Let me end by mentioning what seems to me a carefully put-together and effective project in writing, jointly sponsored by the English Department at Youngstown State University in Ohio and the 19 public high schools in the surrounding areas. It is funded by the Ohio Board of Regents, the four area school systems, and the University. I heard about it in a workshop given at last spring's NCTE meeting in Columbus,

Peale...

Ohio. The project developed from a need the University felt as it evaluated the writing ability of its freshmen, many of whom came from these very school systems. The schools felt a need to learn ways to improve their students' writing, so this was a two-way street.

Briefly, in the fall of 1983, 3,500 high school juniors were given the writing portion of the English Placement Test that the University gives to its entering students. In January '84, 36 teachers were trained in holistic scoring and scored the tests. The results were returned to the schools to help in advising these Juniors for Senior English.

In the spring of 1984, the teachers discussed the papers and developed a list of traits that underlie good writing, as well as a trait scoring guide. Forty percent of all papers were read by trait analysis, and a comprehensive report of both individual and school performance was returned to all students, teachers, and parents. In-service workshops were held, focusing on the implications of the test results for classroom teaching and curricular change. Also, the results of all students entering the university from the high schools involved in the project were returned to the schools.



In June of 1984, 30 participants met in a 40-hour workshop to prepare a resource manual for teachers using all the above materials. Work was done in teams of six or seven teachers headed by a faculty (college) consultant. During this year, teachers will develop and refine the manual, while using it in their classes, and it is hoped that it can be printed at the end of the school year and be ready to distribute to all teachers beginning in September, 1985. In addition, all juniors will be tested in the academic year, 1984-85, and scoring/assessment/reporting will be repeated.

I'm not saying that all of us could or would want to embark on such an elaborate project, but it does contain the four necessary elements for a successful program. Interestingly enough, the most striking thing in hearing the high school and college speakers from Ohio was how much they enjoyed just knowing each other as people. So for those of us who realistically can't manage a project that gets \$30,000 from each of the three units—the state, the university, and the schools—for each of two years, a first step might be contacts. Let me advance the idea here that the most obvious way

to begin those contacts is to use what brought most of us to teaching in the first place—our subject matter field. If we meet in groups of Spanish teachers, physics teachers, history teachers, or even coaches, surely we will begin to see that we are doing the same thing in different ways, at different levels, but the same thing. This kind of getting together would be simple to do, initially, and out of it could grow specific ideas for joint programs. In fact, from this group planning committees could evolve.

Finally, to me, efforts to establish communication and then build programs are our only answer. We in schools at whatever level must reach out and talk to each other and the wider world. And not only do we need to talk to each other in education, to see ourselves as part of its total mission, but also as part of our society at large, as institutions constantly taking from and giving to elements of that society, whether in business, in research, in the arts, or in other areas.

Center Offers Teaching Aids

Teachers seeking audio-visual aids that can be used to stimulate student interest and supplement standard texts are increasingly turning to the Virginia Foundation's Resource Center. Supported by funding from the General Assembly of Virginia, the Resource Center distributes a wide range of films and video-tapes that document and dramatize human efforts to create, discover, and explore new worlds. The Center's collection—much of which was produced with VFHPP funding—focuses on questions of value and meaning, and on the principles and traditions, beliefs and ideas that shape, and are shaped by, our changing culture.

Among offerings that may be of special interest to high school teachers is *The American Short Story*, a series of seventeen film adaptations that vividly communicates the insights of such great American story writers as Faulkner, O'Connor, Crane, James, Fitzgerald, Wright, and Updike. Originally aired by PBS Television, these productions have received national scholarly and critical acclaim. They can be used to deepen students' literary appreciation, as well as to provoke their thinking about personal issues and the nature of the society in which we live.

Suitable for honors courses in art and social history, *Shock of the New* explains and exemplifies the profuse and often bewildering artistic trends of the twentieth century. *The Ascent of Man*, on the other hand, may be used to heighten student awareness of the relation between the humanities and science, particularly in regard to the moral import of attitudes toward research and experimentation. *The Music of Man* provides a delightful introduction to the origins and roles of music in the Western world. And the highly acclaimed *Shakespeare Plays*, produced by the BBC, capture and bring to life the vigor and genius of the world's consummate playwright in a way that no classroom reading ever could.

Other series currently available through the Center include *Vietnam: A Television History*, *The Adams Chronicles*, *Heritage: Civilization and the Jews*, and *The Constitution: That Delicate Balance*. The Center also circulates a variety of individual media items and several exhibits.

To obtain a catalogue that includes descriptions of available media and circulation provisions, write or call:

Resource Center for the Humanities
Box 3697 University Station
Charlottesville, VA 22903
(804)924-6895

Professional Enrichment

Foundation Supports Summer Seminars

The Virginia Foundation is pleased to announce five new additions to its program of summer seminars for high school teachers. The seminars are designed to provide teachers with time and resources to reflect upon traditional subjects in the humanities. They may be sponsored by any accredited four-year college in Virginia; are typically four weeks in length and non-residential; and include a \$500 stipend and recertification credit for each teacher attending. Their three-fold purpose is to encourage cooperation and dialogue between Virginia's secondary school and college faculties, to provide professional enrichment for teachers, and to improve the overall quality of education in the humanities at a time when their role in the curriculum is too often a subordinate one.

If you are interested in attending a seminar, contact its director immediately. If you are interested in developing a summer seminar, or would like further information, please contact the Foundation. We will be glad to provide specific application guidelines as well as advice on writing your proposal. The application deadline for seminars in summer 1986 is October 1, 1985.

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Jean Speer and Thomas Hunt
Heroes and Villains in Contemporary Society: The Struggle for Human Survival in a Technological Age

Developed through extensive planning between university faculty from various humanities disciplines and public school teachers, administrators, and curriculum supervisors, this seminar will address the humanistic issues raised by technological developments in four specific areas: space exploration, biomedicine, information gathering, and industrial production.

Topics will include the rise of industrialism and its impact on human institutions; dangers and opportunities presented by technological developments; history and development of information technologies (e.g. computers, listening devices, communications satellites) and their social and ethical implications; the effects of new reproductive and life sustaining technologies on our philosophical concepts of human life; the growth and development of space technology and the "star wars" controversy.

The seminar will also include detailed case studies of robotics, computers in schools, and strip mining in southwest Virginia. It is based on an extensive reading list of works by authors from Dickens and Orwell to Anthony Burgess and John Naisbitt. The result is truly an interdisciplinary course in which the fields of history, philosophy, literature, ethics, and religious studies are used to address the urgent questions of values and public policy raised by technological development.

Virginia Commonwealth University
Husain Mustafa
Political Rhetoric and Citizenship Education

The goals of this seminar are, first, to expose teachers to examples of American political rhetoric appropriate for classroom use; second, to broaden teachers' understanding of the ways in which these writings and speeches have expressed the values that underlie our democratic system

or have failed to do so; and third, to encourage teachers to apply their best professional skills to the teaching of rhetoric as a means of developing in their students both an understanding of the political process and a strong attitude toward civic responsibility.

Dr. Mustafa, joined by guest lecturers from the disciplines of literature, history, law, theology, and education, will engage teachers in a study of writings and speeches by Thomas Jefferson, Alexander Hamilton, Alexis de Toqueville, Abraham Lincoln, Woodrow Wilson, Franklin Roosevelt, Ronald Reagan, and Martin Luther King, as well as important Supreme Court decisions such as Plessy vs. Ferguson, Brown vs. Board of Education, Dred Scott vs. Sanford, and McCulloch vs. Maryland.

According to Dr. Mustafa, "By their sophistication, citizens help raise the level of political argument and reasoning as they become acquainted with the devices and ploys which drag that level down. Those citizens who have engaged in a careful study of political rhetoric will establish the links between citizenship and statesmanship which is a precondition for democratic excellence."

Mary Baldwin College
Joseph Garrison
A Reconsideration of Emerson and Emily Dickinson: Old Texts Renewed

Teachers in this seminar will engage in a reinterpretation of two seminal American writers, based on readings of fifty poems and numerous letters by Emily Dickinson, selections from Emerson's Journals, letters, and poems and major Emerson essays including "Nature," "The American

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Summer Seminars...

Scholar," "Self-Reliance," "Circles," "The Poet," "Politics," and the Harvard Divinity School Address.

Dr. Garrison's unique teaching method involves a sequential process toward full comprehension and a collaborative approach to understanding. According to Garrison, "the notion that education is a survival course and that the teacher's task is to judge the student's capability for sole survival is obsolete." Thus, dialogue will be encouraged between student and teacher, student and student, and reader and author. Garrison's approach has already proven very effective. One of his students in an earlier seminar entitled "Contemporary Short Fiction" (also sponsored by the VFHPP) wrote:

"Dr. Garrison is a masterful instructor whose genuine belief that his subject matter is crucial to meaningful living is contagious. The course with him has made me examine everything I teach and my methods of teaching with new eyes."

Virginia Union University

William H. Owens

Social Dramas in the American Theatre

The subject of this seminar includes an impressive list of twentieth-century American playwrights: Elmer Rice, Clifford Odets, Arthur Miller, Tennessee Williams, William Inge, Lorraine Hansberry, Douglas Turner Ward, and Edward Albee, among others. Their plays will be read as social dramas, that is, as plays that "by design and intention address themselves to a specific problem in society, or to the nature of society generally."

The social concerns of these playwrights whether racial, political, economic, or sexual are inherently humanistic. Thus, the seminar has three major goals:

- to broaden and deepen teachers' understanding of selected American dramatists and their work,
- to explore the relationship between these authors and plays and their social and political contexts, and
- to identify the means by which these and other dramatic works can be effectively used in classroom study to reveal larger humanistic concerns.

Shenandoah College

John T. Jacobs

Myth and Manner in Modern Southern Fiction

Through study of representative works by William Faulkner, Robert Penn Warren, Eudora Welty and Flannery O'Connor, teachers will attempt to uncover the mythic themes, motifs, and forms in modern Southern literature.

Both novels and short stories will be studied, and the class will use oral presentations, essays and group discussions to focus on the ways in which these writers use the social patterns of Southern life to reveal larger, mythic forms. Such a study, according to Professor Jacobs, will "demonstrate the continuity of humanistic concerns in modern regional fiction, and the presence of universal concerns in immediate circumstances."

This seminar is expected to give teachers more than a familiarity with important Southern writers and their works. It will also offer them techniques of presentation and exegesis useful in their own classroom study of modern — and particularly modern Southern — fiction.

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1-B West Range, University of Virginia, Charlottesville: 22903



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